

REMAINES

OF

That Excellent Minister

Of JESUS CHRIST,

Mr. *Joseph Alleine.*

BEING

A Collection of Sundry Directions,
Sermons, Sacrament-Speeches,
and Letters, not here-
tofore Published.

All tending to promote Real Piety.



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THE EXCELLENT MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL

The Epistle
The Excellent Ministers
READER

There needs no more to com-
mend Joseph (Almon) to thee
but to assure thee that it is his
own hand, though a *William*
deposition *William* hand, that has
cells come to thee, with the *William*
age, only *William* taken from his
mouth as he preached, yet much of it
is the *William* of *William*
thou hast talked that divine and warm
spirit, which run through his other
Writings already published, it will
sure set thee a *William* after what the
bath drop'd from the same holy lips of
hands. The labours of a man of God
so mighty in the scriptures, and in the
power of God, will not be either un-
useful, or unacceptible, though what
thou hast here, *William* *William* *William*
thou wilt find them to be of the same
bread, with *William* *William* *William*
been already *William* *William* *William*

The Epistle.

READER.

THere needs no more to commend this Book (*Remains of Mr. Joseph Alleine*) to thee, but to assure thee that it is his own, and though a Posthumous, yet no spurious birth. Though some parcels come to thee with this disadvantage, onely as they were taken from his mouth as he preached, yet much of it was written with his own hand. If thou hast tasted that divine and warm spirit, which run through his other Writings already published, it will sure set thee a thirsting after what els hath drop'd from the same holy lips or hands. The labours of a man of God, so mighty in the Scriptures, and in the power of God, will not be either unuseful, or unacceptable: though what thou hast here, be but fragments, yet thou wilt find them to be of the same bread, with those loves which have been already dealt out to thee, by the

The Epistle.

Same hand. The Publisher hath gathered up these fragments, it being pity they should be lost. For my part, I have not had the time to read through the whole Book since it came to my hands, but have so far lookt into it, that I Judge it to be singularly useful, for the engaging thee in, and directing and quickning thee to that even, spiritual, active life, which will be both thy beauty and thy comfort.

That the spirit of the living God, which so eminently furnished the head, fired the heart, and filled up the life of this holy man, may so animate these holy lines, that they may become effectual to the forming their very Image upon thy soul and life, is the prayer of,

Thy Friend in Christ,

June 12th. 1674.

Richard Alleine.

The

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The Art of Dying well.

Luk. 12. 19, 20.

Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years---But God said, Thou fool this night shall thy soul be required of thee.

Qⁿ. **S**ince no man hath one dayes certainty of his life, what may we do to be secured from being surprised by death?

1. Sit loose from the world, that you may be able to pack up and be gone upon sudden warning. Here was the folly and misery of this rich man, that he had set his heart upon the world, his mind did run upon his Barns, and upon his Belly; his Goods, were his Gods, he wished no other felicity, than to eat and be merry: If you would be fit for your great Journey to your long home, you must lay aside every weight, and in special, the incumbering and intangling, and insnaring clog and burthen of worldly affections; you must take heed to your selves, least at any time your hearts be over-charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; if you would not have that day come upon you unawares. It is said, there is a fish whose heart is in his
A Belly;

Belly; would there were no such Monsters among men. Certainly, that man whose heart is in his Belly, or on his Coffer, that Idolizes his friends, or his reputation; is no more fit for the assaults of Death, than the unhappy *Trojans* buried in Sleep and Wine, for the Invasion of the well-appointed *Greeks*: or the secure *Laius* for the subtle *Danites*: or the *Shechemites* when sore and unwieldy, for the Sons of violence, and Instruments of cruelty. Study to be Crucified to the world, to use all earthly comforts in a mortified manner, as those that are taking their long leave, and let Death find you dead beforehand; and then let it come when it will, and do its worst.

2. *Intrench not on Gods Prerogative, in carving out the future time.* Reckon not upon hereafter; this was the unhappiness of this rich fool, he counts upon many years; God had given him much goods, and now he is so bold, as to cast upon many merry dayes to spend them; but God is angry at his usurpation, and since he would presume to be his own carver, God rebukes his boldness, and will shew his Prerogative, and will cut him short enough, *this night shall thy soul be required.* Remember your times are in Gods hands, improve with all possible diligence your present allowance; he gives you wealth to lay up for hereafter, but he keeps your time in his own hands; so that you shall not know one day whether you shall ever have another,

a nother, or be allowed to live till the next;
cast not upon to morrow. Live this day well.
When shall we learn to practice the received
Lesson, to live every day as if it were our
last? Blessed men that we should be, if we
would but live up to this short rule. Chri-
stians, why are our lives so far wide of our
rules, and principles? Doth Conscience wit-
ness that you live up to this? If the rule be
good, why do you not daily study to con-
form to it? is it not a shame, that a heathen
should teach you? think, saith he, every
morning when thou risest, I may never lye
down again; and every night thou fyeest
down, it may be I may never rise again;
when thou goest out, I may never return;
when thou comest in, I may never more go
out. Christian, let it be thy serious
thought every morning, I will spend this day
for eternity.

3. *Store up in Heaven apace, and see that
you be rich towards God.* It was the want of
this, that made this rich worldling to be
branded for a fool. Give Alms plentifully,
and provide for your selves Bags, that wax
not old; be sparing as to your selves, but lay
out, and spare not upon the Service of God.
Give your selves unto prayer, let reading the
Word, Meditation, Self-examination, be
your daily exercises, do good to all men,
serve your generation with diligence, study
to be useful, fill up your relations with duties,
and when you have done all, go out of your
selves,

selves, look wholly unto Jesus; and live by faith, this do, and you shall have treasure in Heaven; and let death come, when it will, it will but set you in possession of glory. But woe to them that have laid up nothing on the other side the Grave; Death will break them for ever, and will prove their eternal undoing.

4. *Be the death of your sins*, that they may not fasten like Hell-hounds upon you, when you are most helpless. Mortifie your corruptions, and then the bitterness of Death is past. *Sin is the sting of Death*, that makes it dreadful, that makes it hurtful; O do not arm your enemy against you, death cannot hurt you, but by the weapons that you put into its hands by your sins; if Sin be dead, death is conquered. This is the top of misery, when sin and death shall fly upon a poor creature together, when death, as the unclean Spirit, *taking with him seven other Spirits worse than himself*, shall set a man's Sins all upon him, and besides the terrour of its own apaling looks, shall shew him the more ghastly, and affrighting faces of those Fiends and Furies, his unpardoned sins; this is the sting of death, and makes that the *King of terrors*.

5. *Observe the approaches of your enemy daily*, and remember that you are for ought you know, more than half dead already. Let not gray hairs be here and there upon you, and you

you know it not; observe all the warnings of death, and consider in all your pains and infirmities, that these are but twitches, and items from death. How often is death knocking at your doores? Death hath a great part of you already in possession; whatsoever is past, is death's; and how little, how very little is to come, God knows; sure I am, nothing is yours but the present time. Christians, shall Death get ground upon you every day, and be marching up towards you, and will not you provide accordingly, and make preparations for it every day? as Death comes daily towards you, do you labour to make it good against Death. Let your fortifications go on daily, let some breach be made up; let somewhat be mended every day, forget not that holy Counsel to meditate every evening, that seeing thy dayes are numbred, there is one more of thy number spent, and thou art now nearer to thy end by a day.

6. *Dare not to live in such a case or course, that you would not dare to dye in.* How know you but your next step may be into the grave? and would you be found in your sins? how do you know, but death may meet you at the next turning? and O how unwelcome a meeting will it be, if you be found by it laden with the gains of unrighteousness, or with lusts, and pleasures! would you have Death to find you out of your harnesses? would you meet your enemy, without a wea-

pon? or be found by him in a careless, secure, and sleeping posture? If not, how dare you live at such a rate? are you at an agreement with Death.

7. *Be alwayes in your Fathers business*, that Death may not be able to find you doing evil, or doing nothing; the holy *Calvin* would not forbear his labours in his dying Sickness; but, when perswaded to give over, replied, what shall my Lord come and find me idle? it was said of the laborious *Willer*, who was alwayes very early at his work, that he was half way on his journey before others did set out. Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh, shall find so doing. Remember in what you undertake, that Death may overtake you before you have ended: therefore see that you do nothing without Gods warrant, carry this with you, and you need not fear Death's surprisal. Woe unto you if Death find you, with your work to do. How holily, how happily, ended that Blessed Saint *Mr. Lovel*, who could dare to say in his last Prayer, *Father, I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father glorifie me with thy own self?* Surely the end of that man was peace. The last words that ever he spake, were Blessed be God for *Jesus Christ*. Blessed be God for peace of Conscience. He lived a life of exemplary diligence, and the comfort of his death, answered the holy painfulness of his life.

life. This was Paul's joy, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me the Crown of life.*

8. *Get Conscience to be your friend,* least that should set Death upon you, to worry you, when you come to dye. Beware you mistake not the slumber of Conscience, for a settled peace; the Serpent may be but frozen in your bosoms, when you think him dead. Death will rouse the sleeping Lyon, and then Oh fearful work that he will make! his roaring will shake the heart of Rock, and apale the countenance of Kings, and loose their joynts, and break all their bones. If you be wise, get and keep a good Conscience; carry it to the fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness, get it sprinkled with the blood of Christ. *Exercise your selves to keep a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards all men.* In all your undertakings, let Conscience have the casting voice; ask counsel of it diligently, hear its rebukes patiently, thankfully, as a precious balm that will not break your heads; make it to give in its judgment about your Estates: If it be confident, be sure it be upon Scripture evidence; if it be doubtful, get it well settled in time; if it condemn you, away with speed to your Redeemer; sue out your pardon, get it purified, and pacified. Follow after peace and holiness, but accept of no peace but of God's speaking. Please Conscience,

rather than all the world ; keep her, and she shall keep you ; they that are careless of defending Conscience, are preparing for their own torment at death.

9. Remember your Sick-bed resolutions, and set a mark upon those things that did make death look most ghastly. Woe to you if Sicknes find you again in the same sins which formerly stung you. what will you say to Conscience, or how will you look Death in the face, if you be found at last to have been false to your Sick-bed vows ? *Alphonfus* King of *Aragon*, sent to the Bishop, to know how he should do to become a good man ; he answered, he should be the man he promised to be, when last sick of the Gout.

10. Keep no long Reckonings, but let Conscience bring you in the accounts every day before you sleep. Keep a Day book in your own hearts ; speedily make up any controversies that may fall out between God and your Souls, 'twil be sad to find old things to reckon for, when you come to dye : you cannot imagine the torment that one sin unrepented of, or unhumbled for, may cost you ; study to keep all clear, and even daily within : This made dying *Oecolampadius* clap his hand upon his Breast, saying, *hic fac est Lucis*, 'tis all light within ; daily self-examination will make you to live holily, and dye comfortably ; but if you let things run long, you will be all at a loss.

11. *Set your houses in order that you may not have your estates in the world to settle, when God requires your Souls : Make your wills in your health and vigour, and therein be sure so to settle your estates, as that God and good uses be not shut out, nor forgotten. Wretched men that have so many hundreds to settle upon their Children, can scarce find in their hearts to settle one in the hundred upon Gods special Service.*

12. *Look often into your Coffins, and behold your bones and dust, as shortly others shall, when turned out of your Graves : Be not strangers to the thoughts of death ; expect it, wait all the dayes of your appointed time when your change shall come ; famillarize the thoughts of Death to your selves, that you may be alwayes safe, you must never be secure ; you must pray, and set a watch, and be alwayes upon your guard ; walk every day some serious turns with Death, let it never come unlook'd for ; God forbid Death should come upon you, and you say, I did not think of it : You must daily think of it, and look for it. How holy and happy a man was he, that could say, I have not known what to morrow meant this twenty years? Consider your latter end, learn to number your dayes : God doth number them, why should not you ? if the man of the house had known what hour of the night the Thief would have come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his House to be broken up ; but it is too late*
to

to think of it, when the House is rifled : Be not of them that put far off the evil day ; he that remembers not his end, remembers nothing as he should : It is the remembrance of Death puts life into our Prayers , into our Graces, and all our motions. He that puts off the thoughts of Death, gives his enemy unspeakable advantages : Death comes upon the sleeping and secure sinner, as *Jael* upon *Sisera*, and strikes the fatal nail through his temples, and fastens him to the earth : or as *David* upon the *Amalekites*, when he and his mighty men came upon them, chafed in their minds, as a Bear robbed of her Whelps, when they found them spread abroad upon the earth, eating, drinking, dancing, and smote them from the twilight to the evening of the day.

13. Above all speed to the City of refuge.

First, Get into it, close soundly with *Jesus Christ*. O dreadful work that Death makes with those, that are not found in him ; it tears the body and soul asunder, it drags the soul to Hell, and locks up the dust in Prison, till the terrible Judgment, it puts an eternal end to all comforts, and enters the sinner upon unchangeable misery, and delivers over the Prisoners to the tormentors ; but if you give up your selves entirely, before-hand, and accept Christ by believing, on his own terms ; this will secure you in him, then the danger of this is over. Look to this, whatsoever you neglect, once in Christ, and you have

have the victory; you may send a challenge to Death, and with *Paul* triumph before the Battel, and make the Bonfires, and ring out the Bells, as sure of the conquest, and go with shouts of joy, and palms of victory, and garments of salvation to encounter with, or rather to make spoil upon your already conquered enemy.

2. Keep you in it, when you have received *Christ Jesus the Lord*, you must walk in him; wander from him, and you betray your safety; O look to it that death find you not venturing out of your refuge, by loose walking. God bespeaks you here as *Solomon* did *Shimei*, *1 Kings* 2. 36, 37. And the King sent for *Shimei*, and said unto him, build thee an house in *Jerusalem*, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither, for on the day thou goest out thou shalt know for certain thou shalt surely dye.

14. Lay in a stock of promises now in time against the assaults of Death, that come when it will, thou mayst have a Cordial ready, and be provided with an Antidote. Delight thy soul in meditating on the 6th of *John*, and *1 Cor.* Chap. 15. and the fifth Chapter of the second Epistle of the *Corinthians*.

15. My last, but not my least advice is, that you suffer not the state of your immortal souls to lye any longer at uncertainties. Put to it with all your might for assurance, try an hundred times, and make diligent search into the

the

the state of your hearts. What blessed helps have you in Mr. *Baxter's* Works, Mr. *Richard Alleines*, and others, to put all out of doubt? there you have sure marks, ply your hearts with them, be diligent observers of the workings of your souls; lye at God's door night and day, and put your selves on Gods tryal; if all this will not do it, apply your selves to some faithful and experienced Minister; and above all close with Christ anew, solemnly ingage your selves in Covenant with him, according to the Directions in Mr. *Richard Alleine's* Book *Vindication of Godliness*, to this purpose; how can you live one day, or dye without some evidence that it shall be well with you for ever? Ah the woful case that the poor trembling Soul must needs be in, when it thrusts out into the Ocean of Eternity, not knowing whither it is going, whether it shall be landed in the Region of eternal darkness, or the Land of light, when it must go forth it knows not whether into the Arms of Angels, or the teeth and talons of cursed Fiends and Harpies; my soul hath often relented at the thoughts of that pathetick moan of dying *Adrian*, who thus bespeaks his anxious soul, when ready to be delivered up (I cannot but spoil it by Englishing it) ah my poor, little, trembling, wandring Soul, whether art thou going, into I know not what rough and horrid places? and it is a heart piercing complaint of poor *Beringarius*, who was one of the first lights in the time of the thickest Anti-Christian

Christian darkness; who having often dallyed
with Conscience, recanting over and over to
avoid Death (though he did afterwards still
return to the Preaching, Profession, and Pra-
ctice of the truth, has bemoaned himself on
his death bed : Now I am going to appear be-
fore my Judge, not knowing whether I shall
be saved, as I hope ; or damned , as I fear.
Brethren, if you would not be surprized by
Death, with these uncertainties put all out
of question now, without delay in your health
and strength.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above named matter. I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation. I have no objection to your making such use of the facts as you may see fit. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Yours, very truly,
 J. M. Smith

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PSAL. 4. 4.

*Commune with your own heart
upon your Bed.*

Doſt **T**hat it is the great duty of every man, to be often conferring with, and taking an account of his own heart, 2 Cor. 13. 5, *Examine your ſelves, prove your ſelves; know you not your own ſelves? It is the duty of a man not to take the Report of his heart, but he muſt ſearch his heart, he muſt be often putting queſtions to his heart. The heart cannot be eaſily found out. The Reaſons of the point are theſe two.*

First, Reaſ. 1. Is taken from the difficulty of coming to know our own hearts. Therefore 'tis a neceſſary duty, becauſe it is ſo hard to know our own hearts. Now this appears,

B. *First,*

First, *Because men are so generally mistaken in their own hearts* : and that both *bad men*, and *good men*. *Bad men*, how often do they boast of their good hearts ? And though our *Saviour* tells us that out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, &c. yet all this while they think their hearts are good, they see nothing of these things in their hearts.

When *Hazael* heard of his heart, he wondered that he should have such a heart. He would not believe that there was such a cruel nature in his heart. He thought it was for *Dogs*, and *Tygers* to do this : and yet afterwards he did all this. And so for *Good men* ; how did *Peter* fail in this, that he would die for him ? And *Christ* could scarce put him out of this conceit. And it is like that he did intend what he spake, yea, he did try farther than the rest did, for he only did draw his sword. And who would have thought that there was that swearing, and cursing in his heart as there was ? And so of *David's* Adultery, 2 *Sam.* 12.

Secondly, *It appears in that it hath cost men so dear to know their hearts.* (1) *It hath cost them sharp tryals.* Deut. 8, 2. *God led thee these forty years in the Wilderness, to know what was in thine heart.* That is, to make you to know, One would have thought that they had never been guilty of such horrid unbelief to distrust God, when they did feed upon, and weared miracles. (2) *It hath cost them*

(3)

them many sad falls to know them. 2 Chron. 32. 31. *Hezekiah* nor no body else would have thought that there could have been that in his heart, after God had wrought a miracle for him; And yet God left him that he might try what was in his heart. Brethren take heed that you be not too sure of your own hearts, be often fearful of your own hearts. (3) *It hath cost them many tears and Prayers to know them.* Though some of Gods people have been *Students* of their own hearts twenty or forty years, yet after all this, they do find, sometimes, their hearts be too hard for them.

Thirdly, The difficulty of this appears, *Because the Saints have called in the special help of God, without which they could not come to know it.* So did David Psal. 139. 23. *Search me O God, &c.* Our own hearts are too hard for us unless we take God's *special assistance* with us. Our hearts will deal with us, without this, as a bad neighbour will do when we come to search for our Goods, they will not let you in, except you come with the Kings Officer. Now the difficulty of this lyes (1) *In that the heart of man is so deep,* Eccl. 7. 24. *That which is exceeding deep who can find it out?* Now so is the heart of man; for so Psal. 64. 6. *And the heart is deep.* The heart of man is deep as earth, yea, as Hell. Jam. 3. that is, the hell that is in the heart. (2) *The heart is very dark.* Eph. 4. 18. *Having the understanding darkened, &c.* There you have two parts of the misery of man in

his natural estate. 1. *He is a stranger to God.*
 2. *To Himself.* He cannot see a jot into his own heart, till the Lord do spring into the soul with a new light; as he did into the Prison, they cannot see what there is in the heart. And we need not any further evidence for this, than that common good opinion that men have of their hearts. Though their hearts are full of odious poyson, and the like, yet they cannot see it till God open their eyes by conversion; and then they can see it: But yet it is but *candle-light* that the best of us have here of our hearts. (3.) *Because the heart is very deceitfull, above all things.* There have been great deceits in the world; yet put all together, none in the world is so cunning as the heart, there is no comparifon. You would think if a man were told before-hand, there is a known Cheater come to deal with him, therefore he should take heed of dealing with him, such a man would think sure that he should not be too hard for him; but yet the Saints have known this, that the heart is so deceitful; and they have been twenty or forty years learning it; yet their hearts are too hard for them.

Reas. 2. Secondly, Because the knowledge of the heart is so exceeding necessary. If a man turn over all the Books in the world, and be not learned in his own heart, it is nothing.

Use. The use is to *stir us up to know our own hearts.* I beseech you what ever you neglect, neglect not this duty.

No

Now there be sundry ways of Communing with our own hearts. Sometimes by way of *Consolation*. *Return to thy Rest O my Soul, &c.* Psal. 116. 7. Sometimes by way of *expostulation*. *Why art thou cast down O my soul, &c.* Psal. 42. Sometimes by way of *Exhortation*, to quicken and excite our hearts. *Psal. 62. 5. My soul wait thou onely upon God.* Here he stirs up his heart in *believing* in God. So *awake, up my Glory.* that is, my heart or soul. The soul of man, that is his honour, *Gen. 49. 6.* And see how *David* doth exhort his soul: *up my heart, my Glory.* He found his heart, it may be, somewhat dead and dull, and therefore he stirs it up, sometimes by way of *Instruction*, *Psal. 16. 2. 7.*

But sometimes by way of *Examination* and *Inquiry*, that is the principal on which all the rest do depend, and therefore I intend to insist on that; and I beseech you to stir up your selves to this duty. My Brethren, you should be often questioning with your own hearts; It is sad to think how *Papists*, yea *Pagans* do out-passe us in this, and what a shame is it that we should be such strangers to this duty? After we have been told of it, and have confessed that it is a duty!

Now you must know there is a *double Communication*. *Ordinary*, and *Extraordinary*. *Ordinary*, and that is either *Transient*, or *more solemn*. The first we should be in continually, every hour in the day. The want of this is the reason that we are such strangers to our own hearts, Christian, Remember this and step in

often into thy own heart and thoughts, the heart of man is always talking to it self; and you should often step in and see what it is that they are talking of, see if they are well employed; and if they be not, set them a Task, especially *before, in, and after duties*; especially after duties to search what evil we have committed in the duty, or else we shall not find matter for examination of our hearts in the evening; we should take notes of our hearts all the day, & read them over in the evening. And then besides this, there must be a *solemn Examination*. And here I should beseech you Christians, every evening to spend some time for this work; a quarter, or half an hour. I speak of the *Evening* because the *Scripture* speaks so much of this time; and the practice of good men have been in this time: A very *Heathen* could do this, and you shall find this was *David's* practice. *Psal. 16. 7. My Reins instruct me in the Night-season.* Well then, I would advise thee Christian, to take this advice.

Every Evening before you sleep, set some time apart, more or less, from the world, and set thy heart as in the presence of God, and charge it before God, to answer to these interrogatories.

First. With reference to your *Duties*.

First. Did not God find me on my bed when he looked for me on my knees? This question might be a shaming question, and I cannot without indignation speak of this, that many of us should be so willing to please our selves with a little ease, when we should enjoy those pleasant

pleasant hours with God ! How do you think that God will take this at your hands ? there be many persons that do spend many hours in their *beds*, that they might enjoy Communion with God in, and then they are fain to shuffle up their duties in a corner, I beseech you that this may be left off. It may be, many of you have not so much to do in the world as others, they have not the business that others have, and therefore they need not rise so soon, but lye longer than others. Ah Christian ! do not make that use of it, thou hast no more time for *sloth* than others. I tell thee from God, he hath not given thee any time to be idle in. I am afraid that many of you do not know what it is to *sleep by Rule*. If thou dost not, this is a shame to thee, a Christian should do nothing but by Rule. It may be some will say, what Rule must we use ? *Ans.* We must have respect to our Bodies, what may be for one man, may not be for another ; but for *healthy bodies* six or seven hours is enough in conscience ; let every man give his body no more than his body will require. And remember this general Rule, to be sure that you do use some *Self-denyal* about your *sleep* : That general Rule should be observed, though the particular Rule cannot be given. That excellent servant of God, *Mr. Jordan*, that kept assurance of Gods love thirty years, did up at three or four a clock every morning, and if he did not, he did bewail it ; O that it were thus with you !

Secondly. *Have I not prayed to no purpose, or let Roving thoughts eat out my Duty?* Take an account every Evening what you have gained by that days Prayers, if we did so, this would be brave; then we should grow apace. But this is our great loss, that we content our selves with the duty done, and do not look to the manner of performance; or the doing of the Duty; therefore if thou wouldst gain by thy duties, see *H O W* as well as *W H A T* thou didst pray, How did I pray! was my heart lively or dull? Let it not be enough that your hearts do acquit you in this, that you have not neglected duty, but whether you have not been slack in the duty. And because vain thoughts are our great enemies here, look that these do not eat up thy Sacrifice; we have been often complaining of these, but we are not eased of them: And what is the reason? because we do not take our hearts to Task about it, for our vain thoughts in duty every day; if we did but ask our hearts this every Evening, our hearts would be ashamed to be found guilty every day.

Thirdly. *Have I not neglected, or been very overly in the Reading of Gods holy Word?* I am afraid that many of us do neglect this duty, doth not there pass over our heads many a day wherein we Read not a Chapter? And yet I fear more of the manner how you Read. Did you begin with Prayer, and observe what promises, or Commands, or Threatnings, or Examples were there for you to Imitate, or to fear and avoid? And did you turn

turn it into *Prayer* afterwards? That I would advise you to, to turn some of the Chapter into prayer afterward. O that we should slight the word, that the Saints of God have set such a price upon! The word! why 'tis the word of God, and when we see the hand of God to it, this should affect us.

Fourthly. *Have I digested the Sermon I heard last?* Have I prayed it over, and Repeated it over? Brethren, would you know why we are such Dwarfs in Christianity, why we grow so little? Here is one grand Reason; we *take* in much and *digest* but little; it may be thou art greedy of taking opportunities, there cannot be a Sermon but thou must be at it, or else it is not well; but dost thou Pray it over, and Repeat it over again? The want of this is the reason that we grow no better, therefore content not thy self that thou hast heard such a Sermon; it is never well till God hear of it, in Confession, Prayer, and praise for such mercies as were discovered to thee. This is the way to thrive, and you will never Thrive till you come to this. The Reason why there have been so much sowing and so little fruit, is because the seed hath not been covered by *Meditation*, and watered by *prayer*, the Devil or evil thoughts come and steal away the seed.

Fifthly, *Was there not more of custome and Fashion in my Family-Duties, than of Conscience?* Brethren, if my observation fail not, Christians are more apt to be formal in these Duties than in others. Now this should be a cause

cause of shame to us, this is a very great evil, we are very formal in such duties as do come ordinarily, especially if we are not the Speaker, but do joyn with others: whereas, if thou didst but make this use of it, thankfully to prize, and gladly improve such opportunities, thou wouldst thrive more abundantly. Say with thy self, now I have an opportunity to worship God in the Family. You that are Heads of Families it is a great mercy that you have, that you can lead your Families into the presence of God: and you that are members of the Family, have a great mercy that you live in a Family where you can come twice a day, at least, to God beyond many others, and do you labour to improve it.

Sixthly, *Wherein have I denied my self to day for God?* Brethren, you have not lived like Christians this day, if so be you have not used some self-denial to day; If thou hast not denied thy *flesh*, but hast given it so much ease as it would have: and thy *Appetite*, but hast let it have so much as it would, and thy *tongue*, but let it go out whither it would; thou hast not lived as a Christian.

Seventhly, *Have I redeemed my time from too long and needless visits, Idle imaginations fruitless Discourses, unnecessary Sleep, more than needs of the world?* It is a duty incumbent upon every Christian to redeem his time, this hath sate heavy upon the best of Gods servants, that they have no more redeemed time; now if you would redeem your time, there be these

these *time-Robbers* and devourers that must be watched.

First. *Too long and needless visits.* Many men are so *L O N G* in their visits, that they loose much time of their own, and others too; whom they go to visit. Ask thy heart have not I been *too long* in such a visit, and so steal away others time as well as my own? And so for *N E E D L E S S* visits, when there is no need; be sparing and short in your visits or else *you* will loose your time, and make *others* to loose their time also.

Secondly. *Idle imaginations.* These steal away our time, and we think not of it; If this were look'd to how might we grow in grace? When a man is on his *Journey*, how might he have good thoughts, whereas our hearts are talking of vanity; and so in our *Shops*.

Thirdly. *Fruitless Discourse.* Ask thy heart whether thou hast not failed in this duty? what a shame is this that many Christians do come together and scarce any thing of *God* in their mouths while they be together!

Fourthly. *Unnecessary Sleep.* There is much evil in this, when persons do take up so much time in their sleep, that there is scarce time left for Religious Duties.

Fifthly. *More than needs of the World.* Men must be very watchfull of this or else the world will Rob them of their time, if a man will not use some self-denial about his worldly occasions, but serve God no more than the world will give him leave, he shall serve God but little.

Eighthly.

Eighthly. Have I done anything more than ordinary, for the Church of God, in a time extraordinary? Brethren, we shall never be able to stand before our own Consciences in the evil day, if our hearts cannot acquit us in this, that we have put ourselves to it more than ordinary for the Church of God. You know the troubles of the Church at this day, and we should every one of us run with his Bucket, and put out this fire. God is crying to us, as Moses to Aaron, Num. 16.46. Take a Censer ——— and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an attonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun. O let us run for the Tokens of his displeasure are in the land! It is your tears that must quench these flames that the Bush, the Church is burning in. How is it that we do not weep over the Church? we sit here at ease through Gods blessing, but how is it with the Church of God abroad in the land? How far are our hearts from the temper of Gods worthies heretofore? It was said of One, that when there was any bad news, concerning the Church, they were fain to conceal it from her, least her heart should be overwhelmed with the news of it.

If we had some certain news that our Estates were at undoing, how would we break our sleep? and yet how is it that we are so careless of the Church of God! How is it that others are so wounded and sick, and ready to die with grief, and yet we take so little notice of it? It was the saying of One to me,

I wonder how any can laugh (*said she*) when Gods Church is in such distress. I beseech you take some more time with God than you were wont to heretofore, for the Church of God. What if thou didst pray *twice a day* heretofore, and now thou doest pray *three times* a day, once a day the more though but a quarter of an hour. to seek to God for the Church, and sometimes a whole day; it will come in upon thy account, when the troubles come upon the Church, that thou didst labour with thy Bucket, if it were possible, to put out the fire.

Ninthly. *Have I took care of my Company?* Many times many of us are very great Loosers by this, by vain company; to be sure if they do us no other harm, they Rob us of our *Time*, and that is no small hurt; and therefore fly from their Company as from a Plague-sore. Or if sometimes thy *Calling* do call thee to them, yet do not go among them, before thou hast Prayed to be delivered from the evil of their Company.

Tenthly. *Have not I neglected some Relative Duty to day, as of Husband, Wife, Parent, Child, Master, Servant.*

Secondly, for your sins.

First. *Doth not Sin sit light?* This is the cause of no small mischief to our souls, this is the cause why *Christ* is no more precious, and the promises no more sweet; because sin sits so light: why we can hear the Gospel as a common lovely thing, and be but little affected with it? If thou couldst but get a greater

ter sense of sin upon thy spirit, this would be a speedy course of preventing sin ; this is a cutting down of a great limb of sin. When a man cuts down a Limb of the Tree, a great deal of brush will come down with it ; and so if thou dost but cut down this Limb, let sin sit heavy, down comes self, and pride, and many sins will come down with it. How is it that *Paul* could say, O wretched man that I am &c. and we are no more distressed with the sense of sin ?

Secondly. *Am I a Mourner for the sins of the Land ?* My Brethren, we have great reason, I doubt, to check our selves sharply here, that when God hath made it so plainly a duty to us, and yet we are so little affected with the sins of the Land, when God doth set a mark upon them (onely) for preservation, that Cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst of the Land ; yet we remain insensible ! Can our hearts acquit us now in this thing ? O let us never leave our hearts, but be checking of them for this. If thy name were but wounded, it would break thy heart almost ; and yet how is it that we can hear of Gods name to be dishonoured and yet not break for it ! Can our hearts witness for us that we do never hear of the blasphemy that is in the land, and of the Superstition and Idolatry of the land, but God doth hear of it again by us, before we sleep, by Prayer ? This should be for a lamentation to us, that the wounds that are given to God are no more upon our hearts. We may say of the glory
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of God as they of *David. 2 Sam. 18. 3. 'Tis worth ten thousand of us.* Our estates, and names, and all that is dear to us, yea, our very souls are not so much worth as the honour of God. And how is it then that we can see God dishonoured, and we cannot mourn for it? Gods glory is his Crown that is upon his head; and shall we see his Crown trodden down in the dirt and not be affected with it? we are far from the disposition of Gods Saints and servants heretofore. When *Moses* saw the *Idolary* of the people, he was so zealous, that he overturned the *Tables* that God wrote with his own finger. And *Ezra* when the people had taken strange wives he fate down and *Rent his cloaths. Exr. 9.* Bretheren how may we blush to hear and read this, and to think how far our hearts are from this frame! It may be you do think it enough that you did cry out upon it when you heard the Blasphemy, so that you are free from it your selves, but this is your sin, if you do not mourn over it. (*1 Cor. 5. 2. 7.* No doubt the godly *Corinthians* did detest this sin, but the *Apostle* tells them that is not enough, while they did not mourn over it:) When wickedness doth raign, as if it were the time of the Devils incarnation; as if Hell it-self were broken loose upon us to Act its part above ground, and we not mourning over it.

Thirdly. *Do not I live in something that I know or fear to be a Sin?* If I do thus, there is no peace with God or Conscience to be had for you. *Psal. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity*

in my heart, God will not hear my Prayers It is a sign that God doth not regard thee, if thou art one that dost live in the practice or allowance of any sin; and he will not own thee for this. *Rom. 6. 16.* If thou dost *yield up thyself* to any sin willingly, that is a manifest sign that thou art none of Gods.

Thirdly, *For your hearts.* Ask several questions.

First. *Have I been much in holy ejaculation?* Thus we ought to *Pray continually*; not onely at our set and solemn times, but upon all occasions, to step aside and speak a word or two with God; in our Journeys, and Occupations, this is *walking with God* indeed; when we do not onely take a turn or two with him in the *morning*, and so in the *evening*, but all the day long. It is said of *Mr. Dod*, that he never got up his *Horse*, but he prayed before he came off. Thus did *Nehemiah*, while the King was talking with him, he was praying to God. *Nehem. 2. 4.* So I prayed to the *God of Heaven*, this was a Heavenly ejaculation; this would keep your hearts a praying all the day long. When the hearts of men do naturally bend to God, as the sparks fly upward this is a good thing indeed; when we cannot go by the door, but we must step in and have a turn with God; you will take it as a great kindness for a man not onely to come on set times to visit you, but when he comes in every time he comes by the door to see you; And when thy heart is thus wont to turn into God, this will be an evidence to thee that thy

thy heart is used to converse with God.

Secondly. *Hath not God been out of mind, Heaven out of sight?* put that question to thy heart. My Brethren, this is our great sin, and should be our great shame, that the thoughts of God are such strangers to our souls; that we are so little in heaven in the day, as we are. O what a loser is God by this in his glory! what losers are we by this in our graces and comforts! O were our hearts on all occasions thus *thinking of God* how holy a frame should we quickly grow into? Why should not our hearts be as much with God, as the hearts of the Worldlings be with the Creature? Doth not God deserve it as much as the Creature? His heart is always talking with the World; If he come to hear, his heart is talking with the world. If he come to pray, his heart is alway with the World. Why should not our hearts be talking with God while our hands are employed about this world? It was a Heavenly breathing of a *gracious spirit*, a confounding passage, that I met with; *Lord as formerly I lived without thee in the world, so now let me live without the world in thee. If we did but love God as well as a worldly man doth love his wealth and riches, we should be so taken up with the love of God as quire to forget the world. For the world makes them forget God, that he is not alwayes in their thoughts. Tea, says he, we should be taken up always with God.*

My Brethren, what shall we say for this! How shall we excuse this, that we should be so unmindfull of God, while the Worldling is so

mindful of the world? O what a shame is this! For shame, be ashamed at your 'selves before we go away hence. I profess Christians, I have wondred that God will throw away his kingdome upon some that do care so little for it as we do. O shame thy self out of this evil frame! Brethren, why do not we carry it towards the world, as the world doth towards us? The world doth carry it towards us as *strangers*; and we know not what it will do to us. Why should not we carry it more strangely towards it? O never leave, till the thoughts of Heaven be thy *natural thoughts*, O check thy heart roundly in the Evening for this sin, if thou dost find thy heart faulty here; and never leave till thou hast brought it into a right frame.

Thirdly. *Have I been often looking into my heart, & made conscience even of vian thoughts?* you know your Rule, *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the Issues of life.* Now hast thou been keeping thy heart with all diligence? Brethren, you may be sure your work will go but badly on, unless you look to your hearts, and keep your hearts. Examine then in the Evening, how hath my heart been employed to day, hath it not been a thorow-fare of vain thoughts? of evil imaginations? I fear that many of us do make little conscience of this. It may be thou dost make conscience of vain thoughts *in duty*: but I fear that few Christians do make conscience of vain thoughts at *other times*. Ah Brethren, you have not known what it is to live the life of

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Christianity, if you do not look to this. This must be mended. Brethren, what a blessed thing would this be, if we had but once attained this frame ! If our hearts did but naturally run in a hollow Channel ? This is attainable, and many of the Christians have attained to it. And if it be attainable, methinks we should never be quiet till we have attained it. Why, Christian, take this Rule, force thy heart a while to it ; keep thy heart for a while in this Tract, set it some holy Subject, some good Task, and make it to ply its work ; and when thou hast got to this, then by degrees it will be sweet to thee. It is not enough to say, what hurt is there in such vain thoughts ? It is enough that there is no good in them, that there is no profit in them ; yea, there is a great deal of hurt in letting thy thoughts to run abroad. My Brethren, you do, I believe, every one of you that are Christians indeed, complain of the burthen of your vain thoughts. I believe, that this is the greatest trouble of many Christians here, for the vanity of their thoughts in holy duties. And what is the reason of this ? Because they do let out their hearts at other times ; this is the reason that we have no more command of our hearts in holy duties, because we do not keep them in at other times. God complains of *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 4. 14.* (and may he not complain so of us ?) *O Jerusalem, how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee ?* Have not we, many of us, been complaining these seven or twice seven years of vain thoughts, and yet they are lodging in us ? And

if you take this course with your hearts, you will find more benefit in it, than ever you did in any thing that you have tryed hitherto.

But I know what the flesh will say here, what to be *always* taken up with holy things? this will be an intollerable burthen. O but do not hearken to the evil report, that the flesh will bring upon the wayes of God. Indeed I confess it will bring some difficulty, yet I trust, you will be willing to be at some pain for so great a good as this is, but after a little while you will find it easie. There is nothing that is easie to a Learner, but if it be a Trade or such a Tongue after a little while that he is used to it, it is his delight. And so will this be the sweetest thing in the world to thee, if thou dost but keep thy heart to it a while. And therefore never leave watching and praying, till thou hast got thy heart into this frame.

Fourthly. *Have not I given way to the working of pride or passion to day?* My Brethren, the Spirit of God is a holy Dove that will not rest in an unquiet and froward heart. It was a passage of a very *Holy man*, *Whatsoever you do, take heed of passion.* 2 King. 3. 15. *Elijah* was fain to call for a *Minstrel* before he could allay his passion; I beseech you to watch your hearts when there is a temptation to pride, and a provocation to passion before you, or else you will grieve the good spirit of God, and make him to withdraw himself from you. It is a saying of *Mr. Baxter*, when there is a temptation to pride before me, I am fain to watch my heart as narrowly as I would do the

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Thatch of my house, when fire is put to it; and presently to throw on it the water of Detestation, Resolution, and recourse to God. And so must you do if ever you mean to attain to a heavenly heart. I remember it is written in the Life of a *Holy man*, that he did fear and tremble more when he did hear his commendation, than when it never so dreadfully thundered; and this frame should be in thee. O fear temptations to pride, I beseech you take heed of pride, that your hearts do not grow haughty. If you do not take good heed, you are like to fall, That Servant is never like to do much for God that is puffed up with pride, If thou hast got down thy self, and trod upon the neck of pride, then thou art become a great Victor indeed. This is the reason why God doth not employ us in his service more, because he sees that there is such an evil heart in us, that we would make his mercies fuell for our pride and Lust. Let it be your daily practice to get the victory over this enemy, the pride of your heart. It was a very exemplary pattern that is set before us in that *holy man*; Says he, concerning himself, Methinks I am broken all in peices before God when I speak to him, as when I tread upon an Egg and trample it all to peices. It was a passage in one of his Letters writing to comfort another, I pray God make use of me a poor Rush, to do you some good. Let us lay this pattern before us. But more especially, look to our holy and humble *Jesús*; and you shall find rest to your souls. Follow your pride and passion thus with observation and

detestation every day, and this will weary it out at last.

Fourthly, *For your tongues.* Ask these questions.

First, *Have I bridled my tongue, and forced it in?* This is a very necessary question that must be enquired into. I tell thee if thou hast no measure to bridle thy tongue, thou art no Christian. *Jam. 1. 26.* On the other side if thou hast once got this skill to govern thy tongue, thou art a grown Christian, *Jam. 3. 2.* He that can govern his tongue, hath attained to some good growth and good perfection in grace. Ah Brethren, you had need to set up *Dauids* resolution daily, *Psal. 39. 1. I said I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue, Psal. 17. 3. I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.* And distrusting his own strength you may see how he runs to God for strength, *Psal. 141. 3. Set a watch (O Lord) before my mouth: keep the door of my lips.*

Secondly, *Have I spoke evil of no man?* This is an expresse charge of the *Apostle, Tit. 3. 1, 2. Put them in mind to speak evil of no man.* And the *Apostle Peter* chargeth us that if we will grow in grace, to put away the evil of evil speaking. This is a great and universal sin among us; that we are apt to speak evil of others. When we do hear of any thing that is evil in any one, how do we speak of it to our friends? See that you have good ends & a lawful call to tell, before you tell of anothers evil. Brethren, this cannot be sufficiently bewailed, that there should be so great an evil among us, that

that we should be so backward to speak of our brothers evil to himself, and so prone to publish it to those that we should not.

Thirdly, *Hath the law of God been in my mouth, as I sat in my house, went by the way, lying down, rising up?* How great is the charge of God given us! And how great is our negligence in this work! *Deut. 6. 7. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* Christian can thy heart acquit thee here now? Can thy family acquit thee; that this is thy work when thou art sitting by the fire with them? Can thy yoke-fellow witness for thee, that the word of God is in thy mouth when thou liest down, and risest up? Can thy fellow-traveller say that these are thy talks when thou walkest? *Deut. 11. 8.* What benefit would this be to others, if thou didst but do this? When wilt thou come to the full resolution of them? Well, set this resolution with thy self, that thou wilt not let thy Conscience alone till thou dost come to this.

Fourthly, *Have I come into no Company but I have dropped something of God there, and left some good savor behind?* O what a shame is it that Christians should be so unlike themselves! that when they come into company, it cannot be seen who is the Christian, and who is not! O how should we be ashamed of this, that we should be ashamed of our God! O That thou wouldst make conscience of this, not to come

into any company, but to drop something of God there.

Fifthly, *For your Tables.*

First, *Did not I sit down with no higher end than a beast, meerly to please my appetite?* Did I eat, and drink for the glory of God? you cannot know what it is to be a Christian, till you come to do all things by Rule. Make conscience of this, to set your ends right when you sit down to your Tables.

Is it not a shame, that a Christian, should sit down with no higher end than a beast to his meat? Beasts do eat and drink to satisfy their hunger. Remember that thou sit down with an eye upon God. This will make thy table to be sanctified to thee.

Secondly, *Did I not rise from my table without dropping something of God there?* Christian, how often dost thou contradict the example of thy Saviour? You shall find his discourse when he sate at the table still that he was always speaking of God. And is it not a shame that thou shouldst imitate thy Saviour no better?

Thirdly, *Was not my appetite too hard for me?* Brethren, I doubt many of us are little skilled in the duty of temperance. It may be many of us do think, we may eat as long as it is pleasing to our appetites. This is a great, though I fear a common evil: that as *Jude* says they *feast without fear*. Here, observe this general rule, never to sit down to your tables but to use some *self-denial*. And for an exact rule; we cannot give an exact rule to every

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one; but this, for healthy bodies to eat so at one meal, that we may be hungry at the next I am verily afraid that this sin of *gluttony* is a very common sin: Therefore Christian set a special watch upon thy appetite.

There are two sorts of *intemperance* that we should beware of; either with respect to the *Quantity*, or to the *Quality* of what we eat. We offend in the *first* when we eat more than we can digest. In the other, when a man gives himself to eat that which the *Physician* tells him is not fit for him. And what a shame is this that neither reason nor grace, should keep a person from breaking out into intemperance.

Fourthly, *Did I not mock with God when I pretended to crave a blessing and return thanks?* If I may judge by my own experience, I think that we are more formal in this than in any other thing. Well let this be amended by us. It is a sad thing that we should mock God when we pretend to serve him.

Sixthly, *For your callings.* Four questions here.

First, *Have I been diligent in the duties of my Calling?*

Secondly, *Have I defrauded no man?* Have I observed that golden rule of justice in my dealings this day, that I have done no other-wise to any man than I would be done unto? When I have considered it, I find that there is more of Christianity in our *moral duties* than we are aware of. This is not to be a Christian, to be so onely in prayer, and hearing, &c. but to be a Christian in your Shops, and fields, &c.

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If thou art no *second table-man* thou art no *Christian*. Remember that, this is to be a reproach to Religion.

Thirdly, *Have I dropped never a lye in my shop or trade?* You that have dealings in the world you had need to look to this every hour. I beseech you Christians look to this: this is a fearful sin, and it is a sign that there is nothing of Christianity in thee if this prevail. Therefore set a guard upon thy mouth; and beg of God to keep thy mouth, that there may nothing but truth come from it. And in the evening examine how thou hast kept thy charge in this respect.

Fourthly, *Did not I rashly make or fastly break some promise?* There is a great and reigning evil in this respect among those that trade in the world. Be very *wary* and very sparing in making a promise; and when thou hast made it, be sure to perform it. I wonder how you can read that Scripture, *Psal. 15.* Of those that shall enter into the holy hill of the Lord, *That he sweareth to his own hurt and performeth it.*

And thus I have given you *materials* for the examining of your own hearts. Now my further business to you is to know how you resolve to perform this? will you not content your selves with the approving of these rules only? But will you set it forth in practise? I beseech you do not rest in bare resolution and intention, but resolve that never a day shall pass before these things be done by you.

To stir you up hereunto let me give you these three motives.

First,

First, Consider, that there will be no such means in the world for you to get a sound and thorow conquest over your corruptions. You have been striving a great while with your corruptions : some with vain thoughts, some with pride, som with passion, and it may be you have got but little victory : And what is the reason? Because you have not followed it with constancy. If thou didst but take thy heart to task every day about it thou wouldst surely get the victory over it. As a holy man much experienced in this, did use that comparison : Thou must watch thy corruptions (says he) as a cat doth her prey; either it must keep in, or else she hath it. If thou didst thus, thou wouldst quickly find the theif, & so wouldst bring it to the bar before hand, & have execution done upon it. We must be daily in the pursuit of our corruptions, we must never give it over, not in one prayer or one day, and then we are like to get the victory over it.

Secondly, Consider this is a ready way to Assurance, Brethren, the great reason why Christians are without assurance, is for want of self-examination : for want of pain and diligence in observing their own heart. But now if you set upon this duty you will be skil'd in your own hearts. I doubt this work of self-examination is seldom done by many Christians, except it be upon some special occasion.

Thirdly, Consider hereby you shall come to a thorow acquaintance with your own hearts, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Prove your selves, and then follows, know you your selves? he that proves himself oft, shall know himself at length.

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DEUTERONOMY 32.46. *And he said unto them, set your hearts unto all the words which I testifie among you this day.*

THe words foregoing my *Text* are called the *Song of Moses*, what is storied of the *Swan* is made good in the Saints; they sing sweetest when they are about to die. It is said of *Christ*, that *never man spake like to him*, and he never spake more like himself than a little before his passion. What tender words, what yearning, melting bowels, what endearedness of affection doth he expresse to his poor sorrowfull Disciples in the 15, 16, 17. Chapters of *John*? There is (saith *One* of the *Ancients*) more worth in these three Chapters than in all the Books in the world. *Moses*, that famous servant of God, *Israels* guide, Prophet, Governour, Father, Husband, being about to take his leave of that perverse, stiff-necked people, begins to sing of *Mercy* and *Judgment*. And he sings sweetly in the ears of God, but dolefully, I doubt in the ears of *Israel*. Having ended his Song, he doth enforce both it and the Counsels given in the fore-

to the things that you have heard, lest at any time you let them slip. The memory of man is a leaking vessel, apt to let out as fast as God poures in. It is like a grate in the water-course; still the trash doth stick by us; but the pure water, the things of God and of another world are soon out and gone. Beloved, it is very strange, and yet very true, those things that we are most affected with, which are most fresh in our minds, that our thoughts do most naturally run upon, in a few weeks or months, the favor of them dye, and the things are buried in oblivion: and perhaps scarce ever come to mind again. Concerning this excellent course that we have been directed to, I pray God that I may never live to see it dead and buried: and thus I pray for you all. I confess, I am afraid of myself lest time should wear out the sence or remembrance of so great a duty: but the Lord be better to me than my fears, and to all others whose fear this is. Neither is it implied only that we should never forget this duty, or think upon it only now and then, but that our thoughts should run upon it. That which a man sets his heart upon, he will often mind. The voluptuous man sets his heart upon his pleasure, and therefore will mind his pleasure. The Covetous man sets his heart upon his riches, and therefore minds his riches. Their thoughts are so taken up with those things that they scarce think upon any thing else. So it should be with us. When we are sitting at our tables, lying down, rising up, alone, in company, going to any duty, in our shops, about our callings,

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By [*All these words*] we are to understand not onely the mercies and judgments spoken of in this *Chapter*, but the precepts laid down in the foregoing *Chapter*, and therefore he addes in the next words after my text, [*which you shall command your Children to observe to do, all the words of this law,*] I shall not stand any longer upon the words but presently give you this Doctrine.

Doct. *That when God hath discovered any duty to his people, he looks that they should set their hearts to it.*

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First, What 'tis to set the heart to any duty. This carries in it, First, *Remembrance*. Secondly, *Serious consideration*. Thirdly, *Resolution*. Fourthly, *Love*. Fifthly, *Life*. Sixthly, *Labor*. Seventhly, *Care*. Eighthly, *Constancy*.

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Secondly, *Serious Consideration*, or a pondering of the duty in our heart; as the expression in *Luke is*, chap. 2. 19. Now there are these three things that we are to consider when God doth discover any duty to us. (First,) *What have I done?* Hath not this command of God been neglected by me? Have not I been a meer stranger to the duty now laid open? or, is not this the duty, that the minister and my conscience hath pressed upon me from time to time, and yet I have neglected it. (Secondly,) *What must I do?* Is not this the command of God? And dare I do otherwise than obey it! Is it not the God of heaven that speaks unto me? examine thy self; commune with thy own heart. Is this God to be slighted! His authority to be despised! darest thou, O my Soul, to say the God of heaven nay! (Thirdly,) *What shall I do?* VVhat will become of me in the day of visitation, and in the day of judgement, if I daily neglect this known duty, this weighty duty, this necessary duty? VVhen trou-



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troubles shall come flowing in upon me like the waves of the Sea, one upon the neck of another how shall I be able to stand under them? If I think to go to God for refuge, Conscience will fly in my face, and tell me this is the God, that thou hast despised, whose voyce thou hast not hearkned to. How shall I stand in the day of judgement. and look God in the face, if I am *contentious and will not obey the truth?* What can I expect but *tribulation, and anguish, and wrath, Rom. 2. 8, 9.* A Scripture which me thinks may be as a thunder-bolt in the hearts of any that hath a secret purpose in himself to neglect this duty. If we are careless in this duty, what can we expect but tribulation, and anguish, and wrath?

Thirdly, *Resolution*, A settled, fixed purpose of heart to do what God commands. When God tells us this is my command, thus and thus you must do; our hearts should answer the will of God we will obey: thus and thus we will do. Thus did *David, The Lord said seek my face; and my heart answered, thy face Lord will I seek.* Beloved, we hear our duties, and read our duties many a time; and we are apt to acknowledge that this should be done, and to pray too, that it might be done; but for want of adding of resolution, many a time our convictions and prayers come to nothing. Concerning this duty let us not dispute but determine: let us not stand reasoning shall I, shall I, but resolve upon it.

Fourthly, *Love to the duty*, Christians should not only receive the truths of God, but

receive them *in love*. The commands of God, like meat that pleaseth the pallat, must go down sweetly, duties must not be so much our *rask* as our *choyce* : that which we would rather do than neglect, were we left to our liberty. Beloved, let us not only take up this course as *necessary* onely, but let us love it as an *excellent* course. Let us not go to this work as a sick man goes to take down a loathsome potion, but as a sound healthy man goes to his ordinary meal.

Fifthly, *Life*, That which a man sets his heart upon he will be *lively* in, and do it to purpose. *Rom. 12. 11. Not slothful in business ; but fervent in spirit serving the Lord.* Standing water is not wholesome ; and wine that hath lost its spirit, is not pleasant. *God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit.* He is a most pure *act* : and he will be served with *activity*. God would not accept a blind, torn, lame sacrifice under the law ; and will he accept of a *dead* sacrifice under the Gospel ? He would not have, the *Ass* offered to him, because it was a dull *slug-gish* creature. Nor the *Snail*, because a slow *lingring* creature. We must not come to duties with dead hearts : with dull, drowsie, sleepy souls. When we are going to our work of communing with our hearts, we should stir up our hearts, call in our thoughts, compose our affections, rub our memories and consciences, till we have fetched life into them. Every faculty of the soul should act its part in this work : And here let me tell you that 'tis

no fit time to set about this work, when we are between sleeping and waking: when the spirits are so far spent, and the senses tired, that we can scarce, see the question, or to hear the answer that conscience gives. It will be good for every one to observe the temper of his body for this work, that so drowsiness may not detain him from it, or make him slight and over-ly in it.

Sixthly, *Labor*, we must take pains in duty, *Eccl. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.* There must be labor before the duty, to break thorough difficulties and to bring the heart to it. There must be labor in the duty to keep the heart close to it. The heart will be unwilling to come to it, and therefore must be compelled. It is apt to wander, and therefore must be restrained and held in. We must not onely do well, but be *patient in wel-doing*. The flesh must be crossed: carnal ease and contentment must be denied, when they stand in the way of our duty, or would steal away the heart from God. God required that the *Male* should be offered up to him in sacrifice, because that was *stronger* than the other: to signifie to us that we must take pains and lay out our *strength* in duty. Beloved, wheresoever you are when you should set about this work, say to your souls as *Christ* to the disciples, *Arise, let us go hence.* If the heart be backward, lay the cord of Gods command upon it; and by this cord hale it to the duty. Tell it, that the work must be done and shall be done. When thou art come to

the work, bind thy heart to the good behavior. When thou art in it, often call upon thy heart to mind the work that it is about. When it would give thee the slip, hold it fast. When it would run from any question before it hath given any determination to it, pull it back : adjure it before the living God, in whose presence thou art, and whose honor is concerned in it, to speak out the truth concerning this matter : whether thou art guilty or not guilty.

Seventhly, *Care*, That duty is well done, that is carefully done.

Eighthly, *Constancy*, That which a mans heart is set upon, he will be hardly taken off from it. We must be *constant* in duties as well as *fervent* in them, *Rev. 2. 3.* Beloved, the work that I am now pressing you to, is not to be done once a week, or a month, or every other day ; but every day. Every evening, conscience being mounted upon its tribunal, you are to give accompt of all the things that have passed that day. And remember this, that you never take any excuse for the omitting of this duty, at any time, but what you dare plead before God in the great day of accompt. It is to be performed every day ; as sure as the night follows the day. Neither is this the work of a week, or a month, or a year, or of an evil time onely, while the rod of God is upon your backs ; no, it is the work of your life : it is a duty that you must live and dye in.

We should not take up this course, as the traveller takes up his cloak, which he wears

wears in a storm, but throws off when the Sun shines. This is a duty as well in prosperity, as in adversity. It is Summer-fruit as well as winter-fruit. And I pray God, that neither summers heat, may be able to blast, nor winters cold be able to kill those good beginnings of reformation, that are now, to be found among us. I am afraid, that when God hath broken off one yolk from our necks, we shall cast away another. When God shall break off the cords of the wicked from us, we shall cast away the cord of duty from us. I pray God, that when we come into Canaan, we may not forget nor cast off what we promised in the wilderness. Remember it is for your life. I shall press this upon you in the words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, &c.*

Objection. It is a hard work, a painful duty; a heavy yolk. Now there are several things that I shall speak, to answer this very briefly.

First, This complaint doth argue a very careless, loose heart. Ah Christian, didst thou keep a strict hand over thy self in the day, thou wouldst not find thy evening work so difficult. And hast thou a careless spirit? the more need there is that thou shouldst set upon this work, that thou mightest bring it into a better government.

Secondly, Wouldst thou neglect this duty because it is painful? upon the same account thou mayst cast off other duties. Thou canst not

not pray, nor hear, *as* thou shouldest without pain.

Give way to this objection, and for ought I know, in a little time, thou mayst bid farwel to all thy Religion : thou mayst cast off every duty. Thou canst not imagine what a plague it may be to thee, if thou shouldest give way to this objection. Give Satan an inch and he will take an ell : forbear one duty because of difficulty, and he will easily perswade men to forbear others.

Thirdly, Consider who it is that buzzes this in thine ear. Certainly it *is* the devil, the grand enemy of thy soul. God says, *Commune with thy own heart* : Satan says, no, it is too painful. VVhy, who wilt thou be ruled by, God or Satan? thy best friend, or thy worst enemy? Christian, in these outward concerns, thou wilt not advise with thy mortal enemy in things that concern thy life : And why wilt thou be such a fool in the matters of thy soul?

Fourthly, What dost thou cry out of pain? It is thy very calling and profession to take pain. What mean those expressions in Scripture else whereby the life of a Christian is set forth by *striving, wrestling, fighting, pressing* toward the mark? To take pain is essential to Christianity, and without this thou canst not be a Christian. To leave any duty because it is painful is a contradiction to thy profession thou dost herein deny thy self to be a Christian.

Fifthly, The more difficult the work is, the more

more profitable thou wilt find it. That duty that cost's us nothing, will yeild us nothing: and that duty that cost's *us* much pain, will yeild *us* much peace and comfort.

Sixthly, Consider, *is* not grace worth the taking pains for? What wilt thou take pain for, if not for grace? Look about in the world; see how the men of the world run and ride, sweat and tire themselves for toyes and trifles. What pains then shouldst thou take for grace, one dram of which is more worth than a world. By this means, thou mayst grow in grace more in one moneth than in some years before.

And let me tell thee I have not Charity enough to think thee a Christian indeed, if thou dost not think grace worth any labor or pain that thou canst possible be at in the getting of it.

Seventhly, Consider Christian, what pain Christ did take, and what misery he did undergo for thee. Thy soul was dearer to him than his own glory: and thy salvation, than his own life and blood. And shall not his glory, his commands be dearer to thee, Christian, than a little carnal ease? Think upon it, if thou hast any spark of ingenuity this consideration will prevail upon thee to set about this work.

I come now to propound some *motives* to stir up those that have not begun this work, to set about it. And those that have begun, to go on in this work.

First, Consider *it is the command of God.* It is not the voyce of man, but of God. It

is God that speaks to thee, *Commune with thy own hearts : Examine thy self.* Christian, I urge the command of God upon thy Conscience, wilt thou obey or wilt thou not ? darest thou to set thy self against God ! and set thy will above the will of God ! O think upon it.

Secondly, Consider the *time when*, and the *manner how* you consented to set to the performance of this duty. It was in a *time of love* ; at a *feast of love* ; and after a *Song of love*. Consider what a rich mercy God hath bestowed upon you, in giving you liberty to draw nigh to him in such an ordinance *as* you lately sate under. It was but a little while ago, beloved, that you thought that you should drink *no more of the fruit of the vine, till you drank it in your fathers kingdome*. And behold contrary to your expectations, the King hath sent to you, saying, *come and sup with me : come and sit at my table*.

Hath God dealt so with any people ? He hath feasted you in a time of famine: and spread a table for you in a *howling wilderness*. Doth not this extraordinary providence think you, call upon you for some extraordinary duty ? And do not you think in your consciences that it is this duty ? Why else hath God propounded it to you, and urged it upon you, in such a time as this is ? If you neglect it, it may cause God to take away the *Corn and wine* from you; and to *break the staff of bread*.

Thirdly, What do you know but God put it into the heart of his servant, to press this duty

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ty at that time, to try whether you were real in that love and loyalty which you did then profess to him? I suppose you all understand the transactions that passed there between God and you: that God did put his seal to the Covenant, that he would make good all the mercy promised: and that you did put your seal, thereby binding your selves to the performance of all the duties required.

Fourthly, Consider when another such opportunity is offered to you how will you be able to look God in the face? Methinks that man should not dare to come to the Sacrament, and again put his seal to the Covenant, that hath knowingly and willingly broken his last engagement.

Fifthly, Doth not your own looseness, and the enemies profaneness, and the present dispensations that you are under, call uponyou for more than ordinary strictness in your lives and conversations? The Lord have mercy upon us, what prejudice have we brought to the Gospel by our carnal, careless conversations! What pitch of profaneness are the enemies of God risen to! They are not afraid to bid him defiance at his face! In what a doleful case are many of our brethren abroad in the world, and how sad is it like to be with us? The glory of God is gone from the publick to your houses, and are you not afraid? I am sure there is reason enough to think, that it will take its flight from thence too. And doth not all this call upon us aloud in the language of the prophet, *Lam. 3. 40. Let us search and try our ways and turn unto the Lord.*

Lord. If we look behind us, and see what we have been: If about us, and see how devilish men are: And above us, to see the black clouds that hang over our heads; we cannot but see that it is time to take another course, to live more like Christians, And what course so likely to effect this, as daily self-examination? serious consideration is the best way to sound and thorough reformation.

Sixthly, Consider the *excellent advantages* that will come to thee by taking this course. Christian, wouldst thou have peace of conscience? The sence of Gods love shed abroad upon thy heart! wouldst thou live in heaven? wouldst thou walk in the light of Gods countenance, grow in grace, have thy corruptions overcome and subdued? Behold a most excellent receipt: the best that ever was prescribed.

Seventhly, Consider with what face wilt thou be *able to go to God* and beg of him to subdue thy corruptions, and to strengthen thy graces when thou wilt not use the means? Think upon it with what face wilt thou be able to look up to God and put up such a petition?

Eighthly, How wilt thou be able to excuse thy self *from hypocrisie*, if thou neglect this duty? When thou dost hear it laid down as a Character of sincerity, not to live in the neglect of any known duty.

Ninthly, Consider what base *ingratitude* you will be guilty of, both to God in sending his servant among you: and to his servant for

for all the care and pains that he hath taken for your souls?

Tenthly, Consider what *answer* will you be able to make to God, or how you will be able to look his servant in the face another day; when he and you must stand together and give up your accompt: he of his *doctrine*, and you of your *obedience* to it.

Eleventhly, Consider how *conscience* will sting thee for this neglect when thou comest to dye. Ah Christian, when thou shalt be ready to leap into eternity, and shalt want assurance, not knowing whether thy lot shall fall either in heaven or hell. And conscience shall tell thee if thou hadst taken such a course thou mightest have had assurance: when thou shalt with grief of soul remember this and the other miscarriage, and that if thou hadst taken this course, thou mightest have prevented this trouble; O how will this adde to thy sorrow and break thy heart!

I come now to give some *directions* for the constant, conscionable, easie performance of this duty.

First. *Set about this course speedily.* The longer thou dost delay the work, the more difficult thou wilt find it. VVhat is said of repentance is true here, he that is not fit to day will be less fit to morrow.

Secondly. Be *deeply humbled* that thou hast neglected such a duty so long. Hath it been out of *ignorance*? bewail thy ignorance. Hath it been out of *laziness*? bewail that when men would make the building strong, they will lay the

the foundation low. It is a good way to be constant and successful in any duty, to begin with sorrow and humiliation.

Thirdly, Do it out of a *principle of conscience* in obedience to Gods command: because it is thy duty, and God commands it.

Fourthly. *Bless God for making known this duty*, and prescribing to thee so easie away for the performing of it. Bless God for making known the duty, and God will bless thee in the doing of it.

Fifthly. VWhen you come together let this duty be *the matter of your conference*; or at least, be often speaking one to another of it. Doubtless, it will be good for the carrying on of this work to choose out a Christian friend, and for these to agree together, and unbosome themselves each to other, what doth hinder the work; and what benefit they find &c. and engage one another to take up this course, and be constant in it whatsoever times may come.

Sixthly, *Take heed of formality*, or keeping on a round in the duty without a due regard of the end of the duty. Take some time once in a week, or fortnight, and call thy heart to an account how thou hast sped, what thou hast got.

Seventhly, *Take heed of resting in the duty*. If thou do it make an Idol of the duty God will make nothing of it: God will curse the work and blast thy design.

Eightly, Be careful to *live up to those Rules* by which thou hast engaged to *examine thy self?*

self? As he said of prayer, If thy praying do not make thee leave off sinning, thy sinning will make thee leave off praying. So here, if thy examining thy self, do not make thee to leave off thy remissness; thy remissnesse will certainly make thee leave off thy self-examination. VVhen a man hath been careless in the day, and come to read over these questions, and conscience shall answer guilty in most of these things, this will make the work so tedious, that thou wilt never long bear the trouble of it. Unless thou art able to live up to these rules, thou wilt never be able to hold on in it long. And therefore remember this, if at any time you find that you have been careless in the day foregoing, be sure in the next morning to set up a *new resolution* to stick close to these rules. Undo all that you have done before, as it were, and begin again. Try in the strength of God what you can do this day; how exact you can be this day.

Ninthly, Let us set about the work *with some short ejaculation to God for his Assistance* in it, and his *blessing* upon it.

Tenthly, *Solemnly engage to God* that you will *take up this course* and *be constant* in it, and never lay it down what ever times may come, and temptations may assault you. When God doth enjoin any duty, he requires all the means that tend to the performing of that duty. Now this is the best means that can be thought upon for every one to engage to God, that he will set upon it and be constant in it. I know that the deceitful heart will be very backward,

they are very shy of such engagements. But if they are, remember this, that there is something in the bottom which you will do well to look out: And when you have found it out, to cast it forth with indignation. VVhy should we be backward to do that between God and our selves, which we have done publickly before many witnesses, and I believe shall be called to do again. To set about this work is no more than you have done already, when you sate under that great ordinance and set your seals that you would perform all the duties of the new Covenant. And did you except this? You will find this engagement a great help to the work. Let us this night before we sleep put this direction in practice; engage your selves to God in some such words as these,

O eternal God, thou that searchest the heart, and wilt not hold them guiltless that take thy name in vain, especially in solemn Covenants made with thy self, I do here solemnly promise, that I will set upon this duty of daily self-examination, and in this practise to live and dye. Such engagements God is well pleased with, Jerem. 30. 21, Who is this that engageth his heart to draw nigh to me? As if the Lord had said, come thou art welcome, I take this kindly from thee.

A serious call to Christians,
to win Souls to Christ with
helps thereunto.

Prov. 11. 30.

And he that winneth Souls is wise.

IN this verse we have set forth unto us the excellency of a *Righteous* man: and that in two things. First, *He* is more *useful* than others. Secondly, *He* is more *skillful* than others.

First. *He* is more *useful* than others. The fruit of the *Righteous* is a tree of life. The *Righteous* is not a barren tree; but he is a fruitful bough, as *Joseph* was. And he doth not bring forth his fruit unto himself. His fruit is a tree of life. As the tree of life would give life to them that should eat thereof: so the fruit of the *Righteous* is such, that those

that will hearken to his Counsel, shall partake with him of eternal life. When others are as *thorns* and *brambles*, fruitless, unuseful, of no value in Gods world? the Righteous is a fruitful tree, and as *a tree of life* in the midst of the world.

Secondly, He is more *skilful* and *wise* than others; And would you know wherein his *wisdom* lyes? It is in winning of Souls.

Doct. That it is a chief part of a Believers duty, and the chief point of a Believers wisdom to gain Souls unto God.

First, 'Tis the [duty] of a Believer to gain Souls. Though he must *begin* at home, with his own soul, yet he must not *Terminate* there; but he must look abroad after *others* Souls. He must not be as a *tree* that bringeth forth fruit to himself alone: but he must be a *tree of life*, that whosoever plucketh of his fruit, to make use thereof, shall live.

And then Secondly, 'tis his [wisdom.] As in the text, so *Daniel. 12. 3.* And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. They be the *wisemen* that turn *others* to Righteousnesse.

Here I shall shew you. (First,) That 'tis a chief part of his duty. (Secondly,) That 'tis a chief point of his wisdom to gain Souls.

Firstly, That 'tis a chief part of his duty, and this appears,

First, Because this is one chief point of his love to Jesus Christ. Wherein did Paul discover his love to Jesus Christ in any thing, as

this, in his *zeal* and *industry* to save Souls ?
Rom. 9. 1, 2, 3. And thus doth *Moses* evidence his love. *Exo. 32. 31, 32.* If you would shew your Love to Jesus Christ, this is the best way in all the world to evidence it. *Math. 25.* You may see how carefully *Christ* takes notice of any kindness done to the *bodies* of his elect : but O how much more will he take notice of the love to the *Souls* of his Elect ?

(Secondly,) Because this is the chief point of our love to our *Brethren*. You know that *Christ* tells us that all the Law and the *Prophets* hang upon this, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. And thy Neighbor as thy self.* If the Law doth bind thee to preserve the *Chastity* and *estate* of thy Neighbor, how much more doth God require of thee that thou preserve the *Soul* of thy Neighbour ? This is the principal point of love. *Jam. 5. 20.* *He that converteth a sinner from the error of his wayes shall save a Soul from death, and shall bide a multitude of sins,* If God requires that thou help thy Neighbours Ox and his *Ass*, how much more must thou help thy Neighbors Soul from hell ?

(Thirdly,) Because this is the principal means of bringing glory to *Christ*. Every soul that is brought in to *Christ* is a *Jewel* put into the *Crown* of *Christ*. And wouldest thou not be ambitious of such a service as this ? Every soul thou bringest into *Christ* is an eternal Monument, set up by thee to the name of *Jesus Christ*. Wouldest thou have much service done for *Jesus Christ* ? O then labor to bring

in *Souls* to him, that may do his work here in the world. Wouldest thou have much *praise* to the name of *Christ*? O then labor to bring in *Souls* to Jesus Christ. Every Soul brought in to Jesus Christ is a Trumpet of his praise. The glory of a King is in the *multitude* of his subjects, And so 'tis of Christ. This is the great way wherein we are capable to further the *glory of Christ* in the world, to bring in many *Souls* to Jesus Christ.

(Fourthly,) Because this is a principal *subject* of our prayers. This is one grand petition, *Thy Kingdome come*. In which petition we pray, that the Kingdom of grace may be advanced, our selves and others brought into it, and kept in it. Now 'tis a great part of a Christians business to live futable to his prayers.

Secondly, That 'tis the chief point of a Christians wisdom to gain *Souls* unto Christ. This appears,

(First,) Because *Souls* are the goodly pearls that are of great price with Christ. O there is no *Merchandise* like to that of *Souls*. No gain like to the gain of *Souls*. One Soul is of more worth than all the world. You may see of how great price *Souls* are with Jesus Christ, by the great price that he laid down for *Souls*. Did Christ spend, his blood for *Souls*; and wilt thou not spend thy breath for *Souls*? This is a principal part of wisdom, to deal like wise Merchants, in goodly pearls. A wise man will not spend his time for trifles, that is Childish; but his wisdom doth appear in the weight of those things

things that he layes out his time and pains upon. Oh if you would appear to be wise, lay out your time and strength for *Souls*! If thou couldest gain but one *Soul*, what a happy gain would that be?

(Secondly,) Because *Souls will be the most glorious Crown in the day of Christ*. No Crown like to this, the Crown of *Souls*. The time is coming, when a *Crown of Souls* will be found to be of another manner of value than a *Crown of gold*. What was the Crown that *Paul* wishes for? It was for the *Souls* that he had converted. *1 Thes. 1. 10. What is our hope, or joy, or Crown of rejoycing! are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* Why were these *Pauls* Crown? because he had converted them by his *Ministry*, upon the same account he calls the *Phillipians* (*Phil. 4. 1.*) *My joy and Crown of rejoycing*.

Thirdly. Because we shall most effectually promote the good of our own *Souls* by endeavoring to gain others *Souls*. By teaching of others thou shalt teach thy self. By exhorting others, thou shalt excite and stir up thy self. And nothing will redound to thy advantage so much as thy laboring to gain *Souls*; though *Israel* be not gathered, yet shall I be glorified.

(Fourthly,) Because this will be an evidence of our own sound conversion, if we lay out our strength and time to convert others. In *John 1. 41.* We shall see those young converts, when they were but touched, they labor to bring in others presently. So that if thou wouldest evidence thine own sincerity to thy

Soul, thou shouldest lay out thy endeavor for the good of others *Souls*.

First Use, Is it so that 'tis a chief part of a Christians duty, and a chief point of a Christians *Wisdom*, to gain *Souls* to Christ? Then here is matter of *Reproof*; to reprove those that profess the name of Christ; that lay out their zeal no more this way. That lay not out their strength to gain *Souls*. Yea that do not long for, nor endeavor after the conversion of *Souls*. Surely, this speaks sadly to those that *wholly neglect* this duty. But how exceedingly are many of the *people of God* themselves to be blamed for their Negligence in this? doth not thy heart know that there is a brother of thine doth live in such a sin; and yet thou never tel him of it? What a great evil is this! and unfutable to the pattern of the Lord Jesus Christ? How did he go up and down *doing good*? and so taken up with *Souls*, that he could scarce spare time to *eat his bread*: infomuch that his carnal friends began to take hold of him, and thought that he had been *beside himself*. O how far art thou from this, that thy friends may *live* in their sins, and dye in their sins, before thou wilt labor to save their *Souls*? The devil he laboreth to destroy *Souls*; and how few be there that do labor to save *Souls*? He may carry away the poor soul, and none labours to take the soul from him. We should be watchful and vigilant for *souls*; for our own *souls*. and others *souls*: because this enemy is always taking opportunities to destroy *souls*.
Sure

Sure it argues that you have very little *Love* to *Jesus Christ*, that you do no more for *souls*. That you have little *zeal* for *Jesus Christ*, and that you have little *Love* for your *Brethren*, that you take no more care for their *souls*. It may be you are careful for the *bodies* of those that are under your charge; but how little do you for their *souls*? How many live without the *worship of God* in their Families? Without *Catechizing* their Children or instructing them? And think they have done well if they provide for their *bodies*. Oh, but man God will find out thy neglects: it was their *souls* that was thy charge also. If you look onely after their *bodies*, this you will do for your *swine*. And will you do no more for your *Childrens souls* than for your *swine*? many are ready to say as *Cain*, am *Imy Brothers keeper*? If this be not the language of thy *tongue*, is not this the language of thy *Life*? What dost thou do for thy brother to save his soul from death?

Second Use, is of *exhortation*. To stir you up to perform this *duty* to labor to be *skilful* in this duty, to win *souls* to *Christ*. Brethren, if you would be wise indeed, and if you will gain indeed, labour to gain *souls*. Oh look upon the woful condition of perishing souls! How few of thy friends and acquaintance hast thou good grounds to think they have a share in *Jesus Christ*? What wilt thou have no compassion of thy *Brothers* soul? Thou wouldst have compassion on the body of thy Neigh-

Neighbor: If thou sawest the house on fire about them, and they asleep, wouldest thou not be stirred up, and with zeal forget thy self, and labor to call upon them and awake them? O how many of our carnal friends do remain in a carnal state, and we sit still and let them alone! I beseech you stir up your *souls* to relieve the *souls* of others. This is the best Charity and best pleasing to Christ.

It may be many of you have not wherewith to shew your Charity to the bodies of your brethren: but this way thou mayst shew it, in shewing kindnesse to their *souls*. *Exhort* them, and *strengthen* them in their duty; *comfort* them, *support* them. If thou canst not give them an *alm*s, give them an *exhortation*.

But you will say what should we do, or what *means* must we make use of to *do good* to *to souls*?

I answer, you must do it.

First, *By Scripture demonstration*. When thou goest to deal with *souls*, be sure to make use of *Gods weapons*. Bring the word of God with thee. Go forth in the *name of God*. Pour out thy supplication to God to prosper the work. And then shew thy brother the *Scripture*, to convince him out of the *Scripture*, as *Apoll*os did. Thou canst never throw down the devils strong holds, but by the use of *Gods* own weapons. No Cannon but this will batter down the strong holds of sin and Satan. Therefore bring the *Scripture* with thee to him.

Secondly, *By earnest supplication*. This was
Pauls

Pauls course who did so earnestly thirst for the salvation of his brethren. He strove mightily with God in prayer for them. Rom. 10. 1. My hearts desire and prayer is, that Israel may be saved. Carry thy friends to God, and go to God by prayer, and weep over their carnal and unsanctified state. Bring thy dead Husband and child &c. to God, and put up thy Request to God for them, as Abraham did Ishmael. O That they might live before thee ! How did the prophet prevail by his prayers for the restoring the dead child ? As the prophet did pray in life into the dead child, so thou shouldst strive with God in prayer for dead souls. If thou didst but wrestle with God for thy dead wife, or child, or neighbor What dost thou know what God might do for them ? What knowest thou O man, but thou mayest save thy Wife ? &c. Thus we are taught by our Lord in that great petition Thy Kingdom come. Thus if thou strive by the word of God and prayer, then thou mayest be like to prevail mightily for the good of souls, thou dost converse with.

3. *By kind Obligation. This is another way by which thou shouldst labor to gain souls. Observe that great rule of the Apostle be pitiful, be courteous, tis the Rule that he gives. Labor by kindness and courtesie to gain upon all thou dost converse with, that thou mayst get within him, that thou mayst be in a capacity to do good to his soul. Shewing all meekness to all men. And when thou art thus*
kind

kind to all men, this will be a means to do good to them by what thou doest. If they be such as stand in need of thy *Charity*, open thy *band* to relieve their necessity, and that will be a way to open their hearts to thee to receive in thy counsel.

Fourthly, *By faithful reprehensions. Lev. 19. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbor, and not suffer sin to rest upon him.* Observe that 'tis; quite contrary to *Christian Love* to suffer sin to lye upon him: for 'tis called *hating of him*. Oh Brethren, shew your *Love* to the *souls* that you are among by this, by the faithful rebuking of their sins that they fall into. Manifest it not as a token of *your displeasure*, but as an *ordinance of God*. Deal with him in all *gentleness* and *meekness*. Not gentle with their sins; you must be plain and faithful with their *souls*. You must shew them the danger of such a way: but you must do it with such tenderness to *them* as may make this bitter pill to go down. How do many *souls* miscarry to all eternity for want of professors faithful dealing with them? Oh is it not enough that we have the guilt of *our own* sins upon us, but must we needs have the guilt of our *Neighbours* sin upon us too? Ah *Brethren*, this is enough to convince us that we have little *Love* to our Brethrens souls, in that we have so little care to reprove their sins.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *By your convincing conversations.* Live before all thou dost converse with, in the convincing power of a *holy Life*. This is the way to convince them, *1 Pet. 3. 1, 2.* Likewise you wives be in subjection to your own husband, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word, be won by the conversations of the wives: while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

Observe here. (First,) That even those that be weakest, and seemingly out of a capacity to win souls, may by their *Godly conversations* win souls. Women, who more weak than they? Do not you think that this belongs onely to *Ministers* to win souls: this belongs to all.

(Secondly,) Observe that a careful and tender walking in the duties of our *Relations* towards men, with a conjunction with the duties of piety towards God, is a most powerful means to convert souls. When wives shall be strict in their profession, and yet not be in subjection to their husbands, this will offend the men, and not work upon them. Your profession and practice must one answer the other: and then you are like to gain others, I beseech you take this course to gain souls to Christ, let there be a futeableness in all the parts of your conversation, be the same at home that you are abroad: and bring forth your Religion into your Shops, and Trades, and Fields: That whosoever converse with you may see the power of Godliness in you.

Sixthly. *By your frequent exhortations.*

Heb.

Hebrews. 3. 13. But exhort one another dayly, while 'tis called to day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Observe it, 'tis not the duty of *Ministers* onely to abound in *exhortations*, but 'tis the work of you all. Every one must look to his Neighbours Soul: and that daily. There must be *instancy* and *frequency* in this work: and the reason, is, *lest he be hardened.* Dost thou see such a Neighbour fall into sin? go to him. It may be thou wilt do it hereafter: why it may be the man may be hardened. It may be the man may dye: or thou mayest not have the opportunity: or you may be removed from one another; and the work may be for ever cut off, if thou Neglect it.

Seventhly. By *your careful observation*, of all those advantages that God hath put into your hands for the dealing with your Brothers Soul. Consider and study with thy self, what advantages thou hast upon him.

(First,) Take the advantage of affliction. It may be he is taken down by affliction. Now go and warn him of his sin. It may be now he will hearken to thee. *Job 36. 8. 9. 10.*

(Secondly,) Make use of *thy Relation*. It may be thou art some near Relation in the flesh to him: take that advantage to be dealing with him, for his eternal good.

(Thirdly,) Make use of his *dependance* upon

upon thee. It may be he is such a one as is concerned in thy good-will to him : it may be he *works* for thee, or depends upon thy *Charity* for his livelyhood : take this advantage upon him : it may be he will hearken to thee.

(Fourthly,) Make use of *thy interest* in him. It may be he hath some *affection* for thee : make use of it for God. And this may be a means to win him to Christ.

Rev. 2.



Rev. 3. 1.

*I know thy works, that thou hast a name,
that thou livest and art dead.*

THese words are part of *Christ's* Epistle from heaven to the Church of *Sardis*, wherein he shrewdly checks her hypocrisie and formality, and throughout gives counsels and directions, for her recovery out of that sad estate; from the words we have given you this observation.

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ, doth take special notice of; and makes strict observation upon the works and ways of his professed people. He takes notice of their works! for the matter of them, for the quantity, for the quality of them; as hath been shewed.

We gave you the *Reasons* for confirmation, and made entrance into the *Application*, and have applyed it as to the two first branches; to wit, the *matter*, and the *quantity* of our works. To come now to the *Application* of the third thing, namely, *the quality* of them.

Use. Is it so that the Lord Jesus Christ doth
F take

take such notice of our works for the *quality* of them? then this may be usefull by way of *Reprehension* and *Exhortation*.

First. For *Reprehension*, this reproves us that we rest so much in the work done, and do so little enquire into the quality of our works as to the sincerity and soundness of them. O my Brethren! how often do we pray, and never examine how we have prayed? and hear, and never enquire, how we have carried it, while we have been hearing? O how many a mans bosome am I now in? Brethren, this is a great evil among men. Yea, I fear among Gods own people, that there is not that care to look into their duties, *how they are performed*. Brethren, if the Lord Jesus Christ did as you, look no farther than the outside of your duties, and the work done, then you may rest in that; O but Jesus Christ he looks into the *inside* of them, and he labours to see what there is of soundness and sincerity in them: And seeing the Lord Jesus Christ looks so narrowly into them, should not you? This is the cause of many sins and mischiefs among Professors.

First. This is the cause of much undoing *Self-deceit*, when persons rest in the work done, and do not carefully examine, what *principles* they did act by, and *ends* they did act for; this doth cause many souls to be undone to their destruction. This was the reason why *Sardis* was so miserably out, and *Laodicea*, that she was so much mistaken, they kept on the trade of Religious duties, and because the thing

thing was done, and the duty performed with constancy, they thought they were in a good state. You know the speech of that Church, *I am rich &c.* you are to understand it of spiritual Riches, she thought her self upon the growing hand. O but when *Jesus Christ* comes and sees how little sincerity there was in them, he disrellisheth them, and shews them that their works were not perfect before him. And thus it is with many Professors in these days, that because they keep on in Family-prayer and good duties, they think all is well, and for want of looking into the Spring of their duties, and their ends in them, they are undone by them. O what a miserable deceit is this! when a poor creature shall reckon that he hath so much gold, so much treasure laid up in heaven, and when it comes to be tryed, all his *Gold* shall prove but *Counters*! O consider what a miserable estate that will be, when you shall come with them, Lord, Lord, we have been a praying people, and have owned and followed thee; and he shall say, away you Hypocrites, you shall have the reward of Hypocrites, there was not the soundness of Religion in you; O what a miserable disappointment will this be! *Jam. 1. 26.* He speaks there of some, that did but [*seem*] to be religious, and deceive their own souls. There be some men, their Religion will serve for no other end but to deceive their own souls; to undo them, because they are unsound in their Religion. There are many Professors, that when they come to receive the reward of their

duties they will receive another manner of reward than they thought of; they think to receive the reward of their prayers, and keeping the Sabbath and the like; but he that taketh notice of the heart, knoweth their prayers were, but a taking of his name in vain. When they think to have eternal life for their reward, God will say, I will give you the reward of your works. I found your works to be but hypocrisie, and you shall have the reward of Hypocrites. O Brethren, I beseech you consider it! It is an awakening truth, but deserves your consideration; there are many that will not only be undone by their swearing, and deceiving, and the like; but many will be undone by their praying and hearing. I mean they will be undone by them, by making them the matter of their righteousness before God; and by their confidence and trust, and leaning to their duties. There be many persons, whose prayers and good duties will serve for no other end, but to blind them, and harden them to their own destruction. If you perform religious duties, and do not look into the *manner* of performing them, and take care that you be upright, you may come to blind, and harden your selves by them. O there are multitudes of Professors in Hell this day for wanting care to enquire into this, what ingredients there were in their duties; whether they sprang from principles of grace, or, but from common convictions; whether they were done *for*, and *from themselves*, more than *from* and *for God*. This made Luther say that he was afraid

afraid more of his good works, than of his sins, for his good works were apt to lift him up, but his sins did keep him humble. O Brethren ! you had need to look about you, Satan can make a snare of your good duties, to catch your souls by. There are two wayes whereby men may be undone by their duties, (1) when they make them as a *supposed righteousness*, when men do perform Religious duties, and expect that these should obtain the favour of God, and remission of sins, or, at least, should help with the merits of Jesus, to make up a righteousness for them, on which they may climb up to heaven, and stand before God. Thus those *carnal Jews*, though they were zealous of their duties required by the Law, yet they were lost by going about to establish those as a righteousness of their own. *Rom. 10. 3* (2) when they make them as a mistaken evidence. There are many persons (I conceive) that are so far convinced of the sinfulness of their duties, that they do not lean to these as their Righteousness before God, that those should obtain Gods favour, and their pardon; yet they do conclude that this is an evidence that they have an interest in Christ; and hereby they deceive their own souls-

Object. *But you will say, are not our good duties signs of our right to Christ? doth not the Scripture say, [he that doth Righteousness is righteous?]* I answer, good works are indeed a good sign of faith: but then you must look to this, that they be sincerely good. But

now many do conclude, because the work is done, that therefore they are in *Christ*, when as they do not look into the bottom of their duties, whether they be done in sincerity or hypocrisie, and so do but deceive their own souls by trusting to them; because their duties are not sincere. O my Brethren, how effectually are many Professours undone by this! That are so hardned in their estate, that it is more hard to bring them into Jesus Christ, than those that are openly prophane. Thus it was observed in our Saviours ministry, that it was more hard to bring in the *Self-justifying Pharisees*, than the *Self-condemning Publicans*.

Secondly, Another mischief of this, is, this is the cause of so much pride and self-confidence in duty. Had *Laodicea* but made a due search into her duties, you should have heard another manner of speech from her. O my poverty! Hypocrisie! Deadness! Formality! Lord pittie my woful state! this would have been the language you would have heard from her: but now because she did not search into the bottom, this did lift her up; and made her think so well of her case. The reason why we are so well perswaded of our selves, is, because we do not see into our selves. Did we but thoroughly reflect upon, and search into our duties, when they are performed, we should run to God for pardoning grace. As *Neh. last 22. Remember me O my God, for good.* He did thus after his great zeal for God, and work of *Reformation*. He flies to God to pardon the sins of his duties, O Christian! if thou didst look

look into thy duties, thou wouldst see enough to make thee ashamed of them, thou wouldst be ready to cross what thou hast written, and to cut out thy work, and pick it out stitch by stitch. But now persons not searching into their duties, this makes them stick, and be confident in them.

Thirdly. This is the cause of so much *barrenness & in proficiency in the ways of God*, did the Christian but duly examine his own duties and espy the defects of the *present* duty, and be sure to amend *that* the next time, that was amiss now, this would make him, in a little time, come to a wonderfull *proficiency* in godliness. But when men go on in a *customary* course, and do not find out their errours, it is no wonder they go on in their errours, in one tract, duty after duty, yea one year after another: A Christian that is careless in the examining of his duties, that doth not observe the failings of his duties, to amend at one time what was amiss before, he will be but a Bungler in Religion all his dayes. But he that is carefull to examine it. that he may amend what was amiss, this man will soon come to be his *Crafts-master* in his Trade.

Fourthly, This is the cause of so much *ignorance of our own estate*; It is no wonder that so many Professors are at a loss about their condition; it is for want of looking into their Religion. They do not know whether they be sound or unsound, whether they be going forward, or going backward, all this is from want of care, to examine and enquire into their duties.

For want of this men do not know whether they be sound or unsound, for how doth a man know the tree but by the fruit? When all is done, 'tis mens actual obedience that is the great evidence, that their estates must be tryed by. Whatsoever seeming principles of grace and life, and love, may seem to be within, and good resolutions, yet if all this, be not strong enough to bring forth the fruits of obedience, in a holy, self-denying, and flesh-displeasing godliness, all is unsound. But then we must not look *onely* to the outside of our obedience, we must not take the Carcass without the soul. Now when persons do not look into their duties, but rest in the work done, how can they make any judgment into their estate by them.

So many that are sound Christians, do not know whether they are *decaying* or *increasing*. for want of this, because they do not look into their duties how they perform them. Christians, how do you perform your duties? Do you more look into them, how sweet they are to you? whether it is better than it was? Christians, you must look to this, are you more *extensive*. and *intensive* in your duties? Are you more extensive? Heretofore you looked *onely* at home, to do *your selves* good; do you do good now *to others*? Heretofore, Religion was confined to your *knees*, but now do you bring it forth into your *Shops*, and *Callings*? Heretofore, you were for *personal* godliness, but are you now for *Relative* godliness? Heretofore, you were for duties of the first Table *onely*, but now do you put both Tables together?

ther? this would be a good sign, but for want of mens searching into this, they are at a loss; they do not know whether they are better or worse, declining or increasing.

Fifthly. This is the cause of so much *hypocrisie and customariness in duty*. When a man doth know that there will be a strict enquiry made into him, his preparation will be accordingly: but when he fears not that, he will be the more remisse. So 'tis here. If we passe a strict examination into our hearts, then they will be the more careful to ply the work the more, when they know they shall be looked after. But when they know they shall not be looked into, they will do the work hereafter. Beloved, if we would do the work of Religion to purpose, we must deal by our hearts, as we would by trewantly servants, if you would have any thing done, you must keep your eye upon them, If you keep your selves to this course constantly, to enquire into your duties, how they were done, then your hearts will be careful to make thorough work of it. And indeed this enquiring into your duties, is not onely a means to make your hearts sincere in duty, but it is a great part of sincerity. That man that makes no enquiry into his heart, that man is an hypocrite, there is no soundness in that man. And the lesse care thou hast in looking into thy heart, the less there is of Christianity in thee.

Sixthly. This is that, that *purs Christ so much out of use*. O Brethren! would you know the Reason, why Christ is so little set by?

by? Why, it is because we are not thorowly acquainted with our defects. Were we much searching into our duties, then we should fly to our Advocate, and make use of him. And after the performing of our duties, fly to him for a covering of our nakedness and shame.

Second Use of exhortation. Let us do likewise, if Christ take such notice of our duties, O be much in observing your own duties. How your hearts carry it in your duties. If I could but perswade my self and my hearers to the observing of these two Directions, we should make another manner of progress in Religion. O That you would be but perswaded!

First, *In the entrance of your duties, set before you your rule for that duty;* as the Scholar doth his copy, and do your work by rule. You know the Mason will lay the line before he will lay the stone in the foundation, or else he may commit many errors, and the building may come to nothing. So when you come to perform your duties, set your rule before you. Suppose you come to pray, have some thoughts of it, what be the rules you are to pray by. Consider you are not to come in your own names but in Christs. Take heed that you come not in your own Righteousness, but Christs. And go out to Christ for strength. Remember that God calls for faith and life indury. And so when you come to hear, consider what rules have I to hear by. And so in giving your Alms. And then your work is like to be done to purpose.

Secondly, *Reflect upon your rule in the close of*

of your duty, and examine whether your work hath been done by rule or no. Observe what graces have been acting in your duty, and thankfully take notice of the influences of your graces. Take notice what *corruptions* have been working in your duty, and take the shame of it before God that you should thus miscarry. If these *two rules* were but observed by us, we should come to another manner of proficiency in Religion than we do. But more particularly let me give you three directions for your duties.

First, *Take special notice of the ends of your duties.* O How many do miscarry for want of a Right understanding in this? *Come see my zeal for the Lord of hosts*, said *Jobu*. And all this while he was but Acting for *himself*. And because he did Gods work for such *carnal ends*, God accounts the blood that he had shed to be so much murder and requires it afterwards at his hands, *Hos. 1. 4.* The *Pharisees* were a very strict generation in the performance of their duties. Much in *Alms*, and much and long in *prayer*, and yet all rejected, because they did it for *carnal ends*, *Math. 23. 5.* Therefore I beseech you as you *Love your souls*, look to your *ends* in praying. When you come to prayer Consider what *end* do I propound in this duty? Is not this done out of custome, because 'tis the custome of my family to pray morning and evening? When you go to visit the sick, is it onely a civil custom that I am going about? or am I going to visit *Jesus Christ* in a sick servant of his? And so
of

of our Alms. If a man set out with never so much diligence in the morning, and it be to a wrong point, he is all the while out of his way. Although a man cannot in every motion of the day mind his end, yet in every *solemn action* (as I have shewed you formerly) with care and pains taking with your hearts, you may come to mind your end, and the rule for that particular action. As for example, When you go to your callings, or to pray, or to eat, and the like; in these solemn actions of the day you may come particularly to renew your intentions in your work. And this will manifest your sincerity, and you will come to have the comfort and Joy of your work. And if this be not well looked to, all your duties may serve at last for nothing, but to harden, and blind, and deceive you, rather than to save you.

Secondly, *Look well to your principles in duty*, What principles you acted by and from. There may be many good things that may be done, that may be good for the matter, but yet because they do not act from a principle of Grace, God will reject them. There is no external duty of Religion, but an hypocrite, an unsound professor may do it (for ought I know) as well as a Godly man; onely they differ in their principles and ends. Therefore consider that thy duties come from a renewed heart. Examine, art thou acquainted with the new birth? Hast thou been acquainted with Gods converting grace? renewing thy heart! If it be not thus, all thy duties without this will do thee no good.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Look to what affections are stirring in your duties.* O how was Christ out with *Laodicea* for this ! That because, though much were done, yet there was not much warmth in duty ; there was no Life in them. It is observed that the *artificial breath* is a cold breath but a living breath is a warm breath. As ever you would have the comfort of your duties, you must look to the warmth of your duties. My soul followeth hard after thee, said the Psalmist *Psalms. 63. 8. and thy right hand upholdeth me.*

Ten parting Counsels.

First, **C**ounsel. *Observe the degrees of Gods departing, and mourning after a departing God.* The Lord, seems to me, to take his leave of us by degrees. And because it is by such insensible degrees, I am afraid we are apt to take the less notice of it. God hath not thought good to take his farewell of us all at once. We thought, God had intended to take all from us at first. You know ministers were excluded from their publick labours, and then God lengthned out their liberty in private. And since an *Act* hath passed against our private meetings, so that we have had our liberties with the more difficulty.

culty. And now an Act hath passed whereby your Ministers are to be removed farther from you. However the Ministers of Christ are sinful poor men of themselves as others : but yet considering the capacity of their office, they are the great representatives of Jesus Christ. And when the Ministry is removed, this is a degree, and a great degree of Gods removal. You see God hath removed Ministers by degrees, farther and farther ; and what will be the next remove ! Me thinks the glory seems to be departing by degrees from the nation, as it was in the time of the prophet *Ezekiel* in the 10, 11, 12 chap. If we are left without the powerful preaching of the gospel, and the likely means of conversion, what will it signifie though God should give this nation never so much outward plenty ? If God should make this nation to wash their steps in butter, and fill our bellies with his hid Treasures, what will all this be, if our generations should go down to the pit of destruction by the thousands ? If there be preaching, yet if there be not a powerful preaching, that will save souls, what will it be ? And this great mercy God hath deprived us of by degrees. Oh mourn after a departing God ! Take heed that you be affected with this providence of God. How will God take it of you, if you do not stir up yourselves to take hold of God, now he is departing ? *Wo to them when I shall depart from them : Wo to this nation, and this place when God departs.*

Second Counsel. Take heed that when the public bellows are broken, the fire of Religion go not out. The Ministers of Christ are as the common bellows to blow up this sacred fire. And now God seems to have broken these bellows; Oh take heed lest now Religion should dye away! and the heat and warmth thereof should decay, and by insensible degrees should go out. We are too too much like green wood, the fire keeps no longer in, than while we are blowing the bellows I fear lest you shall see professors too too much like Christ's disciples, who when Christ was taken went every one to his home: so weak their faith, and prevalent their infidelity, that they went their way, as if their work had been done. Take heed lest the like Apostacy creep in among you, that when these helps do fail, you go back again and remit your zeal. Oh Brethren! what ever you let go, be sure you do not let go your hold in Christ; do not let go your hold in Religion. Do but keep your ground there, and no matter what becomes of any other interest.

Third Counsel. When God takes down the common sun, take the more earnest heed to the light that he sets up within. The ministry of the Gospel, and preaching of the word is like the publick light of the common Sun. And this light seems much to fail, and the shadows of the evening are stretched out: and the Sun is like to set upon the Churches. Well then if it be so take the more earnest heed to the directions of Conscience. You know when the Sun is down every man kindles his candle, and takes heed

heed to that. *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.* Conscience, is the light in every mans bosome. Not that the light within, (as some do talk of) is sufficient without the direction of *Gods word*, to guide a man into the wayes of Life: But yet a well enformed Conscience, instructed in the Scriptures, and well studied in the mind of God, and acquainted with the nature and principles of Religion, may be a great help to a Christian to guide him in his common course. My Brethren, if God deprive you of the *preacher in the Pulpit* take the more earnest heed to the *preacher in your bosome*. Set Conscience faithfully on work. This is the preacher in the bosome that tels every man of his duty and of his sins. Hearken now to the instructions of Conscience, to the reproofs and rebukes of Conscience. See and hear what Conscience will speak and direct. What that will touch on, why God hath brought on us these judgments. Oh, take heed! that what ever preacher be silenced, that this preacher be not silenced. Oh! take heed, how you stop the mouth of Conscience. How you defile and harden your Conscience. If Conscience be faithful and free, and you take earnest heed unto him, it may be a standing blessing to you, when the preachers in the Pulpit are removed from you.

Fourth Counsel. *Be sure that none of those extraordinary providences do drive you from God; but that they drive you to God.* I fear lest this may be the issue of these providences

to many, that they may be driven off from God, that they will give over their diligence and zeal; and give up all for lost and gone. O this will be sad indeed! If these providences drive you from God, this will be a sad sign of reprobation; take heed that these drive you nearer to God. Be sure that the more frowning the providences of God are to you, the more do you cleave to him, the more tenderly do you walk before him. 'Tis a fearful sign of an unsound heart, never savoured, and seasoned with true grace, when afflicting providences do drive men farther and farther off from God. God doth intend by his Rod to whip his children home to him, to make them walk more tenderly; to caution them against sin, that he corrects them for. But now if any of you should make this use of his providences, that after all, you should go farther from God, oh how sad would this be! This is to be like King Ahaz. 2 Chron. 28. 22. O let these Chastisements from God, drive you every one the nearer to God. And cause you every one to enquire into his way, and the iniquity that is in his hand, that he may reform.

Fifth Counsel. Let your own eyes be your Overseers, when God deprives you of your publick Overseers. The Ministers of Christ, they are termed Seers, and Overseers; Now God is like to deprive you of these, oh take the more carefull Oversight every one of yourselves; be the more strict in your inspection into your own wayes, in the examining of,

and inquiring into your own hearts. Beloved it is a duty that I have some time since pressed upon you, and I hope you do yet make conscience of it, daily to examine your hearts and ways by those questions; which we gave you for this end, as a great help to this duty: I beseech you whatever you intermit, constantly to keep up, and maintain *that duty*. And now especially when God deprives you of your publick Overseers, you should take care of your selves. I have never any hopes that you will come to any proficiency in the wayes of God, unless you come up to the strict observation of these *Rules*, that so you may become sensible of your errours, that one dayes *humiliation*, may be the matter of the next days *Reformation*.

Sixth Counsel. Whatever become of your other Trade, be sure that you keep up the Trade of Religion. Beloved, though God see it good to impoverish you and undo you in this world yet tis all well; if you keep on in Religion. That is a happy man that hath a thriving and flourishing soul, though he is declining in his estate; but if you go back in grace, though you should get all the world, you are miserable losers. Therefore be sure of this, how ever God do frown upon you in the world, that you do not go behind in grace. Oh, you may sadly fall and go behind hand, before you think of it, if you do not take heed to it, though there be no total falling away from grace for a Believer, yet there may be sad degrees of falling,

and

and God may let you fall so, that you may be sadly wounded & you may break all your bones; and be a common scandal to Religion all your days Therefore look to this, that however God deal with you in other things, account it happy with you if your souls be thriving: & whatever prosperity God gives you, yet if these do not thrive, let none of these things content you. Many persons while they are blessing themselves in their outward increase, are declining in grace. Oh poor Soul! I should pity thy gain, that addeth to thy gain in the world, the loss of thy soul to all eternity.

Seventh Counsel. Take heed whom and what you hear. I fear lest after the departure of Ministers, *wolves should enter not sparing the flock.* And I am afraid lest any should be found among you of itching ears, hearkning after novelties, and heap up Teachers to your selves. Labour to know what Doctrine they bring you before you hear them. Take heed lest men of corrupt principles and dangerous doctrines should make a harvest of you, and draw Disciples after them; and *overthrow the faith of some.* And I cannot be faithful to you without warning you of this miserable danger; you are to take heed to the Call of God. Beware *whom and what you hear*, hearken to those that are the sent Ministers of Christ. It is like enough that Seducers may take the advantage of the present time, that under pretence of further courage and boldness than Ministers have, may seem to alienate the people from their

Ministers, as flying from their flocks as hirelings.

Eighth Counsel. Maintain with constancy and frequency the Communion of Saints. Now is the time my Brethren for those that fear the Lord, to speak often one to another. Now you are deprived of your publick Overseers, take the more carefull oversight one over another, rebuke one another, admonish one another, provoke one another to love and to good works, now if ever, there will be special need of this. If you forsake the *Assembling of your selves together*, we shall see Religion dying as the coal that is put in the middle of the Room by it self.

Ninth Counsel. Walk together in the order and unity of the Gospel. Take heed of any dividing principles, mark them that cause Divisions, and avoid them. Those that are not for peace be not you for them, what ever pretence they may have to *purify* attend them not, unless they are men that are for peace. If once the ranks be broken, the Army is quickly routed, and if once the unity of Christians be broken, then Satan hath got his advantage; and is like to have his will. O take heed that you keep together in the unity and peace of the Gospel, that your *Ministers* and that *Jesus Christ* may rejoyce to behold your order and your steadfastness in Christ.

Tenth

Tenth Counsel. Keep up the Life and power of Religion. Be so much the more vigorous in your *Families*, by how much the more you are deprived of your *publick helps*. Christians; be advised by me, and let Satan be disappointed in this design. He thinks to break the Churches of Christ : Oh but now let every Family be a Church, and let every Master be a Priest and Prophet to teach their Family. Praise and pray for them, and do so much the more in your Families, by how much the more God hath deprived you of your Preachers.

Brethren, so it is that the preaching of the Gospel is like to be scarce, and the means of Conversion is like to be at a stand ; and what shall be done for the Conversion of souls ? Oh be dealing with them, and never leave them, till you see they mind their souls and Religion. Put them upon secret prayer, and the Catechism, and Repeating the Principles of Religion, oh that I may prevail with you to set up this duty of *Catechising* in your Families in this evil time ! And if so be you would but try the use of that help, that I have caused to be printed on purpose for that end, I do not doubt but you would find it a happy means, for the letting in the light into their souls.

Plah

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions in the Department of the Interior, under the act of March 3, 1879, entitled "An Act to provide for the better management of the public lands, and for other purposes."

The following information was obtained from the records of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, regarding the land owned by the United States in the State of California.

The total area of land owned by the United States in California is approximately 100 million acres. This land is divided into several categories, including National Forests, National Monuments, and other public lands.

The National Forests are managed by the United States Forest Service, which is part of the Department of Agriculture. The National Monuments are managed by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. Other public lands are also managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

The land owned by the United States in California is primarily located in the Sierra Nevada mountains, the Coast Range, and the Central Valley. It includes some of the most beautiful scenery in the state, as well as important wildlife habitat.

The land owned by the United States in California is a valuable resource, and it is important that it be managed wisely for the benefit of present and future generations.

1892



Psalm. 74. 1.

*O God why hast thou cast us off for ever?
why doth thine anger smooke against the
sheep of thy pasture?*

THis Psalm, and particularly these words, do contain the Churches sad lamentation over her deep affliction; together with her earnest expostulation with God about the cause. Two things there are, that the Church in these words doth plead with God. First, *The greatness of her Affliction.* Secondly, *The nearness of her Relation.*

First, *The greatness of her Affliction.* And there were three things in her affliction that did make it lye very heavy upon her. First, *The root of this affliction,* and that was Gods [*anger*] *why doth thine ANGER smooke?* &c. (Secondly,) *The height of this affliction.* God was not only angry, but he did [*smooke*] in his anger. (Thirdly,) *The length of this affliction.* It was so long that God did seem to cast them off for [*ever.*]

G 4 Second.

Secondly, The *nearness of her Relation*. Against *[the sheep of thy pasture]* as if they should have said, Lord, if thou hadst done this against thine enemies it had been no wonder. If thou hadst poured out thy wrath, against the vessels of wrath, it had not been so much. But what, wilt thou draw out thy sword against *the sheep of thy pasture*! It were no wonder that thou shouldst take the fat and the strong, and pour out thy judgements upon them; but wilt thou do it to thy sheep! There be several doctrines that I may raise from the words, as

First *Doct.* That Gods people are his sheep.

Second *Doct.* That God may be sorely angry with his own people. With his own sheep.

Third *Doct.* That when God is angry with his people, it becomes them carefully to enquire into the Cause.

Fourth *Doct.* That when Gods people are under affliction, they ought to take notice of, and be much affected with his anger from which they do proceed.

Fifth *Doct.* That Gods people under affliction, are, or should be more affected with his anger, than with their smart. This is that the Church doth complain of: Not that the Church did so smart, but that God was so displeased and angry. That did most affect her.

Six *Doct.* That Gods people are apt to have misgiving thoughts of God, when they are under sore afflictions. God was angry with his people, and their hearts did misgive them, as if God did cast off his people.

Seventh *Doct.* That God may be angry with
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with his people so sore, and so long, that in the judgement of sence, it may seem, that they are for ever cast off.

Eight *Doct.* That though the people of God may not murmur against his proceedings; yet they may humbly expostulate with him about the cause. Why doth thine anger smoeak against the sheep of thy pasture? I have spoken heretofore to the *first* of these doctrines, I shall speak now to the *second*. To wit.

Doct. That God may be angry, and sorely angry with his own people. I have already in the audience of some proved this point. And answered several questions. As (*first*) How anger may be ascribed to God? (*secondly*) How far he may be angry with his own people. (*Thirdly* ,) What is the difference between Gods being Angry with his own people, & with the wicked I shall not respeak any thing of what I have spoken, but proceed to a fourth question.

Fourth *Question*. By what signs and evidences may we come to know whether God be angry? and here I shall first premise four Propositions: & then answer the question in six Conclusions. First, I shall premise these 4 propositions.

First Proposition. That a person or people may verily think themselves to be in Gods favor, when they are indeed under his anger and displeasure.

Second Prop. That neither Gods favor, nor his anger can be known [meerly] by his outward dispensations.

Third Prop. That Gods anger or favor must be judged of, rather by our carriage toward him,

him, than by his carriage towards us.

Fourth Prop. That for the discovering of Gods favor or anger, we must consult rather the book of Conscience, and of Scripture, than the book of providence.

First Proposition. That a person or people may verily think themselves to be in Gods favor when they are indeed under his anger and displeasure. This is an awakening consideration, and therefore should be duly laid to heart. A Church may think her self in a very good and safe condition, and yet Jesus Christ may loath it, and be ready to spue her out of his mouth. As of the Church of the *Laodiceans*. Men may cry to themselves peace and safety, when sudden destruction may come upon them. And may say, *Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come unto us;* and yet be upon the very brink of destruction. Men may have great hopes of the presence of God with them, and yet evidences of Gods departing from them. And may cry *the temple of the Lord*, when God is even casting them out of his sight. We read of some that had a great deal of confidence of Gods favor; they would still *lean on the Lord*, and were confident that he had favor for them; and yet the Lord was ready to break out upon them to their destruction, *Micah 3. 11, 12. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity &c. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be ploughed as a field.* They may think that because the ordinances of God are a-
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mong them, that God is among them; when God may be turning them up as a field that is ploughed. This ought to startle and awaken men. Sirs, it is not your *Confidence*, but your *evidence* that will carry it. Many times there are none so confident of Gods favor, as those that are marked out for the objects of his eternal wrath and displeasure. The carnal *Jews*, they would not be beaten out of their carnal confidence. And though the prophet told them of the wrath of God that was coming against them, yet they would not hear him, till wrath came upon them, and *there was no remedy*.

Second Prop. That neither Gods favor nor his anger can be known, [meerly] by his outward dispensations. No man knoweth either Love or hatred by the things that are before him. Men have very shrewdly erred by judging of Gods favor, or wrath by his outward dispensations. When the *Psalmist* took his mark by this, how sorely was his faith shaken, and *his feet almost gone*? When he beheld the Godly in affliction and under suppression; and the wicked prospering in their wickedness. The 73 Psalm gives you a true account, what a sad bout he had by this. He observed they had *no bonds in their death, and they were not plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish.* They were very wicked and yet very prosperous. Full of sin, and yet full of pleasure, and riches and all outward accommodation. Whereas on the other side, he observed that he was afflicted, and o-
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thers of the Godly with him. And was tempted from this, that God did regard the wicked so much, or more than he did the Godly. And therefore 'tis a very dangerous mistake among the multitude. Many think on the one side, that because God doth prosper them, and bless them as he doth, that therefore they are in the favor of God: for if they were not, he would never deliver them, and carry them through so many troubles as he doth, if he did not love them. This is a dangerous mistake. And so some on the other hand, because God doth afflict them here, that therefore he hath mercy for them hereafter. They have their hell here, and therefore they shall not go to hell hereafter. Alas man! thou mayst have thy hell begun here, and lengthened out hereafter to all eternity. Thou canst not say from this, that thou shalt escape the torments of hell: but notwithstanding all this, thou mayst hear God say to thee at last as to *Dives*, *Son remember that thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy good things: but now thou art tormented.*

Third Prop. Gods favor or anger must be judged of rather from our carriage towards him, than from his carriage towards us. If our walk be according to Gods rule, we may be sure that peace shall be upon us. Gal. 6. 16. If we are such as fear God and work Righteousness, then we may be certain that we are accepted with God. Acts. 10. 35. If we do well, we shall be accepted. They that by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honor, and immortality, shall have eternal life. They are

are under promise *Rom. 2. 6, 7.* But on the contrary, *tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil.* Those that walk disorderly, and in disobedience to the will of God, however God may prosper them in their ways, as they may seem, yet they must know that Gods anger is against them. They may know that his anger is against them, because they walk against him : against the flat command of his word. *For these things cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of disobedience, Eph. 5. 6.* The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, *Rom. 1. 18.* So they that walk in ways of unrighteousness, and ungodliness, they may know by this that they are under the wrath of God ; however God may seem to carry it towards them. Men may not conclude that because God doth not presently smite, that therefore he is not angry with them. God may speak never a word, neither strike a blow ; and yet may treasure up wrath against them at the last, and they never think of it. Many a poor wretch thinks, that God, because he is silent that he approves of them, *Psal. 50. 21.* *These things hast thou done and I kept silence. Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself ; but I will reprove thee and see them in order before thine eyes.* God would make them know, that though for the present he spake nothing, and did not shew his anger ; yet he would make it known against them. If our carriage be dutiful, and humble toward God, what ever his carriage be towards us, we
may

may be sure that his love is towards us. *God* doth many times carry it as if he were angry, for the tryal of his people, to see whether they will trust him, and walk *by faith* and not by *sence*. Whether they will believe though it be against their own feeling. He will many times put his Children upon this exercise, not in anger, but in Love. As the tender Nurse doth the Child. So on the other hand, *God* may let men alone, and let them prosper in the world, though he be dreadfully angry with them.

Fourth Prop, That the favor or anger of God, is rather to be gathered from the book of Scripture, and of conscience, than from the book of providence. Many times the book of providence is very dark, and seems to speak that *God* favors those men; whereas if we look into the *Scripture*, we shall see that they are the vessels of his wrath. And the book of providence may seem to tell us, that such a people are the objects of his wrath, which if we look into *Scripture* we shall find, that they are the people of his love. Therefore the *Psalmist*, when he could not know by the book of providence, he went to the *Scripture*, to the Sanctuary, to the oracles, and had those things opened there. This book was a key to open those riddles that he could not understand before. He sees that those men that did prosper thus, were the objects of his wrath. And on the other hand, that the poor and afflicted were the onely beloved of *God*. Though this was against his mind before; *Psal.* 77. 13.
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Thy way O God is in the Sanctuary. That is, in the place where thy word is preached, and explained, there is thy way, the meaning and sence of thy providence is discovered. Those that have the *Scripture* against them, these are they that bear the marks of Gods anger upon them. And those that have the *Scripture* for them, what ever others judgements be, these be the men of his delight. Therefore let the word of God be your judge. And with the book of *Scripture*, compare the book of *Conscience*. For, saith the *Apostle* if our hearts condemn us not, than have we confidence towards God. But if our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts and knoweth all things. Let conscience be consulted with, when thou art trying thy case, whether thou art in the favor or under the anger of God. And that will be able, comparing thy state with the *Scripture* to give a great guess to this, whether God have favor for thee or be against thee.

Now I must adde six *Conclusions*, in which the question shall be resolved. How it may be known that God is angry with any people.

First Conclusion. The *Raign* and dominion of sin is a most certain evidence, that any person or people, are under Gods anger. Where sin is raigning, and abounding, gross and hainous sins abounding in any nation or place, you need not any other evidence that God is angry with that people. Especially, when those iniquities

Quities are tolerated by *Magistrates*, or found
 in persons that are in a publick place, then
 they are fearful signs of *Gods* anger: then you
 may know there is great misery for such peo-
 ple, though he may seem at present to prosper
 them. And so for any *particular person*, whe-
 ther the sin be gross or close, if thou art under
 the power of any one unmortified sin, thou
 mayst be sure thou art under the anger and
 wrath of God, *Eph. 6. 5. For these things*
cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of
disobedience. Rom. 2. 8, 9. But to them that
are contentious, and obey not the truth indigna-
tion and wrath, tribulation and anguish unto
every soul that doth evil. Art thou yet in thy
 Natural unconverted state, unrenewed? thou
 mayst go away with sadness; thou goest up
 and down with *Cain*, with certain marks of
Gods displeasure upon thee; for we are by
Nature Children of wrath. If thou art in the
 estate thou wert in by Nature, thou art surely
 under the wrath of God. If thou remainest in
 thy old unbeleef, thou needest no more dispute
 about this matter, the wrath of God abideth on
 thee: The whole book of God, and the threat-
 nings of God, do rise up with open mouth to
 condemn thee that livest in any unmortified
 sin. Now sin is unmortified, when persons go
 on in a purpose of sinning, and in a willingness
 to practise sin. *Rom. 6. 16. Know ye not, that*
to whom you yield your selves servants to obey,
his servants you are to whom you obey? whether
of sin unto death, or of obedience unto Righte-
ousness. To whom you [yield] your selves
 ser-

servants to obey. The servant of God is taken [captive] by his sin under a temptation; but if you yield your selves servants to them, you are the servants of sin. Yield your selves servants to [obey] whom do you ordinarily [obey]? If the devil can do more with you to draw you from God, than God can to keep you to him; if he can do more with you to make you neglect prayer, than God can to keep you to it; or if he can prevail with you to commit any sin, more then God can to keep you from it, you are under the wrath of God. There is a *two fold anger*, a *stated anger*, and *occasional anger* or *temporal anger*. Occasional and temporal anger, and so the Children of God may fall under his anger: but by their application to him in Christ that anger may be taken off again. But there is a *state of anger*, and that is with the wicked. And this thou art under, who dost live in unmortified sin. Thou art in a state of anger, in a state of wrath.

Second Con When the threats and menaces of Gods word are against men, this is a sure evidence of his anger. You know we may discern the anger of men by their *Rebukes*, and *threats*, and the like. If the word of God be against thee, be sure the anger of God is against thee. Therefore consult the *Scripture*. If the *Scripture* do speak sadly of thy state, that is an undeniable evidence of Gods anger, *Zeph. 2. 5. Wo to the inhabitants of the Seacoast, the word of the Lord is against you. O wo to them that the word of the Lord is against!*

H

There

There is wrath from the Lord against that man. Therefore if the Lord do speak against thee, Make thy peace with speed. Do as *Haman*, when he saw the King rise up in haste: he stood up to make request for his life to the Queen. *Est.* 7, 7. So if thou dost find that there is evil intended against thee by thy sins, O fall down upon thy knees and make up thy peace.

Third Con. Publick calamities, except when they come upon a people for Righteousness sake, are the evident tokens of Gods anger. When God doth strike a nation or a people with war, or with pestilence, or with famine, or the like this is a manifest token of Gods anger with such a nation or people. This you may see throughout the book of *Judges*. Still it was when the people had sinned, and God was angry, that these publick calamities were brought upon them, *Judg.* 2. 13, 14, 19, 20, 21. and 3. 7, 8. and 10. 6. There you may see that publick calamities did proceed from the sins that were among them. And if sin be a sign of Gods anger, you may easily make application. Should not we fear and tremble? should not we humble our selves in the dust, and cloath our selves with sackcloth? God hath sent all his three great plagues together upon our nation, *Famine, Sword, and War.* O apply this, and see that you be sadly affected with Gods displeasure against our Nation.

But here I put in an exception [*When they come upon a people for Righteousness sake*] then though the calamities be common and publick.

Yet

Yet it is not a sign of *Gods* anger. In the *per-*
mitive times, the Christians were fearfully per-
secuted every where, and were killed by the
thousands, and therefore this was rather *Mar-*
tyrdome, then *signs of Gods anger*.

Here two things must be considered: whe-
ther these afflictions did find them *cleaving* to
the Lord in their duty: Or, going off from
him, and *declining* their duty. Now if they
do find them decaying and remitting their zeal
and diligence, then those evils, though they
do come upon them for Righteousness sake, yet
they come for Gods anger too. And so though
they should rejoyce in them as coming from
wicked men, yet they should be humbled, and
take notice too of the hand of God against them
in correcting their vices.

Fourth Can. When God doth suffer men to
prosper in an evil way, this is a fearful sign of
Gods anger. Prosperity is so far from being
a sign of Gods favor, that when prosperity
doth attend men, and follow them in an evil
way, it is one of the most dreadfulest marks
in the world against a person or people. *Whom*
the Lord loves he rebukes, and chastens, that
is, if they wander and go out of his way. And
we are judged of the Lord, that we should not
be condemned with the world, *Cor. 11. 32.* So
when the Lord lets men go on in their evil ways
unpunished, it is a sign he intends they shall be
condemned with the world. Brethren, be
jealous of your selves, if God let a person go
on in a way of wickedness, it is a fearful sign.

Hof. 4. 14. I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredome &c. Therefore the people that doth not understand shall fall. It is a sign that he intends higher displeasure against a person, when he lets them go on in a way of sin, and will not stop them, but let them take their swinge in sin. Those whom he intends love to, shall be corrected here, and stopped: but others shall have the gibbet kept for them at last.

Fifth Con: Spiritual judgements are ever to be taken as fore evidence of Gods anger. Many times God doth inflict temporal judgements with an intention to reform them, and amend a people: but when he gives up a person or people to Spiritual judgments, this is a token of his highest displeasure. God doth threaten as one of the forest evidences of his displeasure [a Famine of the word] So Psal. 78. 59, 60. When God heard this he was wrath, and greatly abhorred Israel: so that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh the tent which he had placed among men. When God forsook the tabernacle, and deprived them of the former tokens of his presence in their ordinances, this was a sign that he abhorred Israel. So our Saviour as his tokens of his displeasure against the Church threatens that he would remove his Candlestick. He would unchurch them as one of his most fearful threatnings, Rev. 2. 5. Rom. 1. 23, 24, 28. The Apostle speaks of some that were under the fearful token of Gods wrath in this. This was a fearful token of Gods wrath against them

them indeed, when God should give them up to such spiritual judgments. *Psal. 81. 10, 11. My people would not hearken to my voice: so I gave them up to their own hearts lusts.* O this was dreadful indeed! This was the forest expression of Gods anger that could be against that people, so *2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. God shall send them strong delusions, &c. Rom. 11. 7. 8. The elect hath obtained it; but the rest were blinded, &c.* O do you see any such souls thus delivered up? O let your hearts tremble for such persons. This is a shrewd evidence, that they are persons given up to great judgements.

Six Con. Temporal afflictions, when they find the people of God straying, and wandring, and declining from him, are evident tokens of Gods anger. They are not always tokens of his anger. When they find us keeping close to God, they are for tryal, and not signs of Gods displeasure? *Job* was highly commended by the Lord when the affliction was upon him. Therefore we must consult conscience whether it was not for such a sin that God is now afflicting thee. And if thou dost find it was for sin, thou hadst need run quickly and make the atonement. But if otherwise, you may conclude it is but for proof and tryal and exercising those graces that God hath given you.

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A Discourse made by Mr.
Joseph Alleine on a night. of
 solemn *Thanksgiving*, which
 he held with his people in
Taunton, some dayes before
 the five-mile-Act came in
 force, by vertue of which
 he was then to leave them.

Most dearly beloved Brethren, with
 no little Joy and Thankfulness have
 I thought of this time, when I should
 once more see your faces together :
 and be so truly glad, with so heart contenting a
 mercy, as to *rejoyce with the Joy of Gods peo-
 ple and to glory with his inheritance.*

It is a time, that to some, may seem un-
 seasonable to set up Thanksgivings when our
 calamities are so near approaching. But sure-
 ly, if I had never hopes to enjoy one day with
 you more, the last day should be *a day of
 praise.*

praise. And if I were sure that we were now to take our farwell of Christians and Ministers, and of all our former liberties, I should exhort you that we might join once more in lifting up hearts and hands in blessing *God* for all the mercies that we have met with together. Your Condition is never such but your mercies are infinitely greater, and more then your afflictions. Neither may the sence of misery at any time surprize you, so as to drown the Thankful acknowledgement of Gods mercies. *God* that hath been alwayes good to you, hath never been better then since you have had affliction. *Elijah* was never so happily fed at a full Table as when it was a time of great Famine: when *God* sent him every bit of bread and flesh by the mouth of a Raven. Oh how sweetly do you think that every bit of this bread did relish with the *man of God*? when he saw that he received it immediately out of *Gods own hand*?

Brethren, though it hath been a time of great calamity; yet *God* hath herein heightned his mercy to you; you have seen the *Bush of God* burning and yet not consumed. The portion of Gods Children hath been taken away, and yet our cheeks have been fat. We have been cast with *Daniel* into the Lyons den: but *God* hath sent his angel and shut the Lyons mouth, and we have not been destroyed but are here together to praise the Lord.

Methinks there are several *periods* of time, sine the time of our calamities, wherein *God* hath appeared to us, when we thought all had bin gone. One period was when your Ministers
were

were shut out of publick by the *Act of Uniformity*. Another when we were cast out of our private Meetings, by the *Act made against seditious Conventicles*. So called by the iniquity of the times. Another by this *Act* that doth now cast Ministers out of their *Habitations*. And me thinks every period should end with praise. We read, that when they removed the *Ark*, that when they had passed such a number of paces then they *slew a sacrifice*: so me thinks as we passe these periods of time, at the end of every period we should *offer praise*. What though God hath separated your preachers from you, ye as he said, if the Soldier dies fighting, and the preacher preaching, and the swan singing, then the Saints should part praising. Oh Christians this is the spirit that should be in you, that what ever God doth with you for the time to come, you should resolve to end in his praise for the mercies past. If it were the last day we should have together, surely methinks we should end in praise. And since the Alarm hath been sounded, by the late *unhappy Act*, that saying of *Sampson* hath run often in my mind, *let me dye with the Philistines*: so methinks I would say, let me dye with praise. And now O God, let my hands and heart be lifted up with thy praise: that I may touch their hearts; that every heart of theirs, may sound forth thy heavenly praise. But 'tis easie to be lost in praise, the mercies of God are a deep that cannot be fathomed. Where shall I begin or end? How shall I reach to the top? or when shall I come to the bottom? however I will not say

nothing, because I cannot say all. Let me touch a little of the mercies of God : a little this Evening to shew the mercy of God to you. And let it live upon your hearts as long as you live. Consider now what great things God hath done for you, whether you are the people of God in general ; or people of Taunton in particular. How great are the mercies of God to you !

First, As you are the people of God in general. This is the top of all your mercies. In this sayes our Savior rejoyce, *not that the spirits are made subject to you : but in this that your names are written in heaven.* Brethren we have many mercies to praise the Lord for : but this is that should most affect us, Gods peculiar mercy to us, as we are his chosen generation, and peculiar people. Consider now what the Lord hath done for you. Let me open it to you in six or seven particulars.

(First,) *You are the Election of Grace.* (Secondly,) *You are the first born of God.* (Thirdly,) *You are the first fruits of the Creation.* (Fourthly,) *You are the Remnant of escape.* (Fifthly,) *You are the Burgesses of heaven.* (Sixthly,) *You are the Members of Christ.* (Seventhly,) *You are the living stones of the Temple.* Blessed is the man, you will say, whose happiness this is. But this damps my Joy and comfort, lest I should not be the man. Now lest this should damp thy Joy, let me give thee two Characters, by which thou mayst come to know whether this be thy case. Thou mayst know it by the Transactions that have passed between

between Christ and thy Soul: and by the *Treasure* that hath been made *choyce* of by thee.

First, By the *Transactions* that have passed between Christ and thee. Hast thou passed under the *Bond of his Covenant*? as Christ hath offered himself to thee, hast thou again delivered up thy self to him? hast thou renounced all thy known sins? And took the Lord Jesus Christ for thy Head and Husband, to love, honor, obey him above all? hast thou considered the conditions of Christ, and accepted of them all? and sayest as my Lord saith, so I will do. Doth thy heart close with the self-denying laws of Christ, and art resolved not to allow thy self in any known sin; but to rise again by repentance? If so, thou art the man I am speaking of.

Secondly, Thou mayst know it by the *Treasure* that hath been made *choise* of by thee. Every man is known by what he pitcheth his heart upon for his Treasure. What is it, man, that carryeth thy heart? The things *seen*, or the things *unseen*? Who hath most of thy heart, *God* or the world? Which way stands the bent of thy heart? a godly man must not judge of himself by what he is at worst, under a prevalent Temptation: Nor others by what they are at best in a fit: but where is thy constant bent? What is thy chiefest care and delight? Is it to converse with *God*? And be like to *God*? VVhat doth please thee best, when thou art contriving thy happiness? Doth this, that *God* is thine? Or is it something here below? VVhat is thy care? Is it to please *God*? If it
be

be thus, thou art the man that I am speaking to. And now you that are thus, that have passed under the bond of Gods Covenant; and have made choice of him for your happiness, know and understand.

First, *That you are the election of Grace. The election hath obtained it, saith the Apostle, but the rest were blinded.* You are the handful that God hath taken out but the heap are left. Oh Christians, the great Transaction of God from all eternity hath been about you. And the great transactions of God in time have been about you. The Lord did from all eternity enter into a league with his Son for you: and did give him to you. God was laying the foundation of your *happiness* before he laid the foundation of the *world*. God was making provision for you from all eternity. Our Saviour is often speaking of this gift in *John 17.* so *John 10. 29.* *My father which gave them me is greater then all, John. 6. 39.* *And this is the Fathers will that of all that he hath given me I should loose nothing.* And so, *All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me.* Oh Christian, doth not this affect thy heart? that the eternal Counsel of the great God should be taken up about thee? that God should be bargaining and agreeing with his Son about thee! that thou shouldst be mentioned *by name* from all eternity? *Christ knows his sheep by name.* And he bids such *rejoice, because their names are written in heaven.* O man, did God design thee from all eternity by name! How should this affect thy heart? what did God build

build all this world for? It was that Christ might have a seed. And why do he continue the world? 'tis because Christ might have the elect finished, when the elect are numbred the Trumpet shall sound, and away he comes to gather his elect. Christs coming, what was it for? that he might ransom his sheep. And his second comming, what is it for, but that he might receive his elect? *John 14. 3. I will come again and receive you to my self, that wher I am ye may be also, Math. 24. 31. He shall send his angels, with a great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.* What was the end of Christs low Humiliation, even to death, but to *save his people from their sins? Math. 1. 21.* And what is the end of Christs glorious exaltation, to all power and greatness? it was all for the elect, *John 17. 2. Christ hath all power in heaven and earth delivered to him for your sakes; for the elect. That he might give eternal life to the elect.* Oh man, what a heart hast thou, if all this cannot move thee! if thou hadst stood by, when he laid the foundation of the fabrick of this world, wouldst thou not have said surely 'tis for some great end? if thou hadst stood by when Christ was Crucified, and known the mystery, wouldst thou not have said, surely this is for some great end? why all this was for thee.

Secondly, *You are the first born of God, Heb. 12. 23. you are come to the general Assembly, the Church of the first born which are*
written

written in heaven, The *Apostle* speaks of our *priviledges* as if we were come to heaven already. You *[are] come* &c. you are Gods *Israel*; and beside, you are admitted to have fellowship with Jesus Christ, and by faith are made one with him. Now Christ is Gods first born, and we being joyned to him are made one with him. We are *joynt heirs with Christ*. Now the first born had many *priviledges*, As.

(First,) The first-born had the *dearest affection*, *Zach. 12. 10.* *They shall be in bitterness as one for his first-born.* There is the great sorrow, because there run out the great stream of affection, in this respect you are the first-born of God: you are they that have his dear affection, *Eph. 5. 1.* You are called the *dear children of God*. O the dear expressions, that he useth to you, and the dear affections that he hath for you! you are called the *dearly beloved of his soul*. O what drops of love doth God drop in these sacred leaves of this book? how full is the book of the *Canticles*? *My love, My dove, My undefiled.* God doth out bid the love of all the parents in the world. Can a woman forget her sucking child? she may; but *I will not forget thee, saith the Lord.* The dearest mother when she lets her child out of her hands may forget it, but you are never out of my hands: you are engraven there. O what rousing bowels are there in those words, *Jer. 31. 20.* *Is Ephraim my Son? is he a pleasant child? For since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still: therefore My bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy*

mercy upon him saith the Lord. Oh man dost thou consider that all this is spoken to thee? All this love, God hath in his heart for thee; yea beyond all expression dear art thou to God.

(Secondly,) The first-born do carry *the inheritance*. This is your case, the inheritance is for you. Though a man have many Sons, yet not many *heirs*: 'tis his first-born is his heir, though a King hath many Sons, yet but one King: 'tis the first-born that is King after him. In this respect Gods children are the first-born: for they are all heirs, you are all Kings, you that are begotten again, you are begotten to *an inheritance, to a heavenly, that fadeth not away.*

(Thirdly,) The first-born had a *special blessing*. Gen. 27. 19. *I am Esau thy first-born.* And you know when *Esau* knew that *Jacob* had got the blessing of the first-born, he accounted himself undone: and he *lifted up his voice and wept*. Brethren, you have the blessing. Let others glory in their wealth and riches; who ever have these benefits 'tis you have the blessing. Beloved, you are the *Jacobs*, when others are the *Esaus*: you carry the blessing of the first-born. Nay and God ratifies the blessing on you as that upon *Jacob*. *I have blessed him and he shall be blessed.* *Balaam* was sensible of this; *He hath blessed and I cannot reverse it.* You that are Gods first-born, God hath made you unchangeably happy, you are unalterably blessed, God hath blessed you and it cannot be reversed.

(Fourthly,) The first-born did carry *the honor*,

nor, and were accounted the excellency and strength of the family. *Gen. 49. 3. Reuben, thou art first-born, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* And God says of his first born as *Jacob* of his. Thou art the excellency of dignity. So God sayes of you: I will make of you *an eternal excellency.* You know if a Knight have many Sons, there is but one Knight. And so of a Lord 'tis the first-born is Lord after him: he carries the honor of the family. So you my Brethren, you carry the honor: you are the onely honorable persons in Gods account. *Since thou hast been precious in my sight thou hast been honorable.* And, *those that honor me I will honor.* Brethren, put this together, and see if there be not reason to lift up the praise of God on high: and to say *Now I will lift up thine horn on high.* Surely God hath lifted up your horn on high.

Thirdly, *You are the first fruits of the Creation.* *Jam. 1. 18.* *Of his own will begat he us with his word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his Creatures.* Now there were several things observable in the first-fruits, As.

(First,) The first fruits, they were the *choice of the fruits.* And therefore God, that did ever require them to bring the best, would require them to bring the first-fruits of the Creatures. Beleivers are the first fruits of Gods works. And God sets more value upon this workmanship then upon any thing else beside. Other things they shew some footsteps of God: but the new creature that hath the very Image of God, and so is the first fruit of all. The
first

first fruits are of a more higher price and esteem than any other. So are you: you are those that he calls his excellent ones. Those whom he binds up amongst his Jewels. The Saints are the desire of his eyes, and the joy of his heart. Christians, I speak this to you and you must apply it. You are the desire of Christ. *Psal. 45. 11.* He asks no other portion but you, *Psal. 2. 8.* And you are his *delight* as well as his *desire*. *Prov. 8.* The wisdom of the Father from all eternity, had his *delight in the habitable part of the earth.* *Isaiah 53.* He shall see his seed, and he shall see of the Travail of his soul and be satisfied. You are his seed, you are the Travail of his soul. Christ is content and satisfied to have this portion. And as the woman forgets her sorrow when she sees her seed, that a man child is born: so Christ forgets all his pain and trouble, when he sees his seed the travail of his soul.

(Secondly,) The first fruits were but few in number, in comparison of the full number and harvest. So 'tis here, the *Saints* are but few. *Thou art the fewest in number of all people,* saith Moses to Israel: so may I say to you, you are as two or three Olives upon the uppermost boughs, or four or five upon the outmost branches. Gods first fruits are but few. Ah Christian, stand still and admire free grace, that thou shouldst be one of this few. Christ doth manifest himself to you, and not to the world. He prays for you, and not for the world, you are a peculiar people to him. O what a little flock of kids hath Christ, in comparison of the herds
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and droves, and swarms that *Satan* drives before him to destruction! and art thou one of that number that stand with the lamb upon mount *Sion*? O how shouldst thou cause the praises of the Lord to be heard? they are but few of the number of mankind that are admitted into this grace wherein you stand. Therefore as you have special favor from God, engage in the praise of God.

(Thirdly,) The first fruits were *holy to the Lord*. These God did reserve for himself, as it were, for his own eating. As you know, the first fruits are preserved for to be presented to Kings at their table for their eating. So are you. Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, *Psal. 4, 3. Know ye that the man that is Godly, God hath set apart for himself. God sayes as it were, set this man by for me. God says of his first fruits, these shall be set aside for me. These shall be mine, Mal. 3. 17.* As God would put a special honor upon the *Sabbath day* above all other dayes, because upon this day he rested from his Labor: so you are the honor of all the Creation: because you are a people that God hath set apart for himself. Ah Brethren, here is your dignity and priviledge above all people, that you are separte to the Lord: that you have special relation to him. This makes you to be above all other people, because the *Sun* of Gods favor shines peculiarly upon you.

(Fourthly,) The first fruits were to be gathered into the *Sanctuary*, *Deut. 26.* God had in his Temple, the Chambers into which
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was to be gathered the first fruits, as peculiarly dedicated unto God. So we read, in *Neh.* 12. 44. Thus you are Gods first fruits. And God will gather his first fruits into his Chambers, into his glory shortly. He shall gather *his wheat into his garner, Math. 3. 12. Math. 13. 30.* The husbandman there, (who is no other than God himself) he speaks to his servants, that they should let alone the tares for a season, and *in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather you together first the Tares, and bind them in bundles, and burn them but gather the wheat into my Barn.* This harvest is the end of the world: and the angels are the reapers; and heaven is the barn; and you are the fruits, and God will send shortly, and gather you into his barn; when the wicked shall be turned into hell in bundles, they shall be cast into *Tophet*; but you shall be gathered into Gods barn; into his glory. God do but stay awhile till the fruits be ripe and ready, and then you shall be all brought safe into his Treasury.

(Fifthly,) The first fruits were to be set before the Lord *as a monument of his faithfulness,* *Deut. 26. 1. &c.* Where you may observe these particulars. First, The first fruits, they were to be presented before the Lord as a *thank-offering*, so you. Secondly, The first fruits were to be brought *to the priest*, though you are the first fruits, yet you can expect nothing of God but at the hands of the priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, They were to be offered up *with a thankful acknowledge.*

ment of Gods mercy, and their former misery, the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God; and thou shalt speak and say, *A Syrian ready to perish was my Father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a Nation great, mighty, and populous.* Fourthly, They were to be set before the Lord as a monument of his faithfulness: thus beleivers, my Brethren, they shall be taken by Christ, and presented by him unto God as a monument of his faithfulness. *And thou shalt profess before the Lord thy God, I am indeed come unto the Country concerning which the Lord sware unto me: surely the Lord is faithful in all that he hath promised: and there hath not one word failed of all that he hath said by the mouth of all his prophets.*

Fourthly, *You are the remnant of escape,* 'tis *Ezrahs* phrase. Brethren, you know that all mankind was interested in *Adam*: all in one common bottom. *Adam* miscarried and so all mankind is shipwrecked at once. And O how few are the number of those that escape! and art thou one of them? O how should you bless the Lord! methinks, you that God hath taken out of all the kindreds of the earth, you should run to God, as the several messengers to *Job*, *Thy Sons and thy Daughters were eating and drinking wine, and the house fell upon them, and they are dead; and I onely am escaped to tell thee.* So should you say, oh so many of the Tribes of the earth are famished, and

and I am left alone to tell thee : to praise thee.
 O methinks so should the redeemed of the
 Lord compass him about. O methinks I should
 see you in the posture of those redeemed, lifting
 up your voices together as the voice of many
 waters. Oh Christians, look back to your former
 bondage. Do not forget the *Egypt* that you
 were in bondage in : and the bonds of your
 lusts, that you were held Captive in. O look
 back to the house of *bondage* and to the *Iron*
furnace, the cruelty and tyranny from whence
 you have made your escape, and now lift up the
 praise of your Redeemer. How should you stand
 upon the brink and look down into the horrible
 pit from which God hath plucked you ! Bre-
 thren, you all suffered in that common ship-
 wrack ; yet, as in the voyage of *Paul*, they
 all escaped safe to land, so God hath ordered
 you, that all that were with Jesus Christ are e-
 scaped. O methinks you are like the world
 full of corn, and in comes *Satan*, and mows
 down whole swarfs, and you are left as a sin-
 gle ear here and there upon a ridge. O re-
 member fire and brimstone is coming down up-
 on the world, and God hath laid his hand up-
 on you and made you escape, and provided a
Zoar for you. O while you see the *Egypti-*
ans drowned upon the shore and you escaped,
 how should you be much in praising the Lord ?
 the deluge is coming down upon the world,
 and but one Ark of men shall be saved. And
 are you the men that God hath purposed to
 save ? are you the men that God hath put
 forth his hand and took in ? O bless the Lord
 for this mercy.

Fifthly, You are the Burgeses of heaven. Heb. 12. 23. To the general assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in heaven. We read of a City that hath foundations; whose builder and maker is God, of that City art thou a Denizen. Thou art no more a stranger and forreigner but a fellow Citizen, and of the household of God: though heaven and earth are so distant in place, yet there is a real communion: the Saints here are free burgeses of heaven. Christian, thou art the man, that art made free of heaven: and who art born free.

Sixthly, You are the members of Christ, we are members of his body; of his flesh and bone. Consider Christian, belevest thou this? if thou dost, thou needest not be called upon to praise. O what to be a real member of Christs living body! yet so 'tis. If thou be touched 'tis Christ suffers wrong. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* He is as tender of you as of a member of his own body: and as dear doth he love you. And as sure as he carryed the members of his body into heaven, so sure will he carry thee. And as sure as the members of his natural body are glorified in heaven, so surely will he glorifie thee.

Seventhly, You are the living stones of the Temple, 1 Pet. 2. 5. Thou art cut out of the common quarry with others, as rugged a stone as the rest: but thee hath God pitched upon and chosen to be a polished stone for his own building. VVhen God hath left others he hath pitched on thee. Christian, it little matters though thou art undervalued of men; yet here

herein God hath honored thee, those that men rejected God hath made the chief of the building.

Now put all this together and see whether God hath not done much for you, you are the election of grace, the first born of God, the first fruites of the Creation, the remnant of escape, the Burgesses of heaven, the members of Christ, the living stones of the Temple. O whence should God have praise if not from you? who should lift up his name if not you? but,

Secondly, Consider what God hath done for you as you are the inhabitants of Taunton in particular. Though the former should ever ring loudest and carry the principal part in your praise; yet the other may not be forgotten.

Now will I sing a song to my welbeloved, touching his vineyard, Isa. 5. 1. The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the Town of Taunton, and the inhabitants thereof his pleasant plant. And now I will tell you what God hath done for his vineyard. He hath plucked up the fence thereof, and yet it is not eaten up. Her hedges are broken down; yet they that passe by the way do not pluck her, nor the wild Boars of the Forrest eat her; nor the beasts of the field devour her. Shee is burnt with fire; and yet is not burnt up. O what hath God done for his vineyard here? O remember now, O people what the enemy consulted, and what the Lord answered; they said come let us curse Taunton and let us defie the people of God: But who

*shall curse whom the Lord hath not cursed ?
And defie whom the Lord hath not defied ?
God hath blessed, and who shall reverse it ? hap-
py art thou O people: who is like thee O Taun-
ton, saved by the Lord the shield of thy power,
the sword of this excellency ? The archers have
shot at thee, yet they have not hurt thee.*

Shall I particularize the mercies of *God* to *Taunton* ? why, consider he hath been a *Savior* to you : a *shepherd* to you : a *keeper* to you,

1. He hath been a *Savior* to you. He hath saved your throats from the *sword*, your habitations from the *flames*, your lives from the *plague* your persons from the *prison*. (1.) He hath saved your Throat from the sword, have you forgotten that you were a people devoted to destruction, by the sons of violence ? but *God* disappointed them and gave you your lives for a prey.

(2.) Your *habitations* from the flames. The flames have been set in Ambush against you, and yet your habitations are not burnt down to this day.

(3.) Your *lives* from the plague. It hath been devoured by the plague heretofore, and yet it hath not devoured you. How eminently hath *God* preserved you in this place in the time of common calamity that hath been among others. O think not that it was because those were greater sinners than are in *Taunton*: No, but because *God* hath a peculiar intention of saving you. Yet I say to you as *Christ* to them, *think not that those upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, were greater sinners than*

than any in *Jerusalem*. I tell you nay, but except you repent ye shall all likewise perish. We have had the same sins, and yet God hath preserved us.

(4.) Your persons from the prison. How often hath God preserved you? he hath been like the cloud upon *Israel*: and upon all the glory there hath been a defence. Once indeed some of you have tasted of a prison: but what a mercy was it, that it was but once? I might tell you what a mercy 'tis to you, that you have not been troubled with the *prelates Courts*. but,

Secondly, God hath been a shepherd to you. Therefore you have not wanted. VVho is it that drives you by the still waters, though you are as a lamb in a large place, 'tis because God is your shepherd VVhence is it that you lye down in green pastures? 'tis because God is your shepherd. How hath God provided for you formerly and of late?

Thirdly, God hath been a keeper to you. VVhen you were sent to prison God did keep you. O do not forget the mercies of a prison. I beleive, that of all the passages of our lives, many of us have no such experience of Gods mercy as in a prison. O the provision that God did make for us there! O the constant meals; the sweet meals that God did make for us there.

Brethren now let us thankfully commemorate all these mercies. Let me call upon you as the Psalmist, *rejoyce in the Lord, ye righteous*; and again *rejoyce O ye people*, let your voyce be heard on high. Let us worship and fall down

down before the Lord our maker. Let it be said,
 praise waiteth for thee a God in Taunton.
 VVell might praise wait for God in Taunton,
 for God hath waited to be gracious to us.
 There was the place that he chose to put his
 name there. *There break be the Arrows and
 the spear.* VVho is like our God who rideth on
 the Heaven for our help, and on the sky for our
 aid? Blessed is the people that heareth the joy-
 ful sound, they shall rejoyce in thee O Lord.
*The Lord is our deliverance, and the holy one of
 Israel is our King.* Shout therefore, O inha-
 bitants of Taunton, for great is the work of the
 Lord with you. And now, O Lord, Bless them,
 and accept the work of their hands, and lift
 them up: and let them lift thee up for ever.

A Ser-

**A Sermon preached in order
to the Sacrament, on a Sa-
cramental day.**

Luke. 2. 10, 11.

*And the angel said unto them, fear
not : for behold, I bring you good tidings,
of great joy, which shall be to all peo-
ple.*

*For unto you is born this day in the Ci-
ty of David, a Saviour which is Christ
the Lord.*

MY Brethren, good tidings, I know
must needs be welcome to you at
such a time as this. Now God hath
sent me to you with the most bles-
sed news that ever came to man : that is, that
to you is born a Saviour.

You

You have here the History of our *Saviours* birth. The shepheards, they were abroad in the fields watching over their flocks by night, *v. 8.* and while they were thus diligent in attending their flocks, then the angel brought this news to them. From whence observe by the way, *how good it is to be following our lawful callings.* The fruits of these tidings was great fear, that fell upon the shepheards when they saw the angel. And against this fear, the angel bid them *be of good comfort.* Then you have here, the news, *behold I bring you good tidings &c.* where you have observable. First, The messenger; the Angel. Secondly, The fruits of it; great joy to all people. Thirdly, The matter of this news; *That to them was born a Saviour.* From the words observe this Doctrine.

Doct. That it is the blessedest news that ever came to the ears of man, news worthy of angels from God to be the Messengers of it. that unto us is come a Saviour.

Brethren, I must needs commend the Grace of God to me this day, in making me the messenger of such news to you as this is. I am unworthy to bring you this news, it is for angels to bring this news, they were sent with this message, as you see; yet God hath been pleased to send me as a Messenger with these tidings to you. Now I shall shew you that this is the best news that ever came to the ears of man, and that.

First, If you consider the *deplorable condition* that he found man in.

Secondly, If you consider what a great sal-
va-

vation he hath wrought for man.

First, If you consider *the deplorable condition* that he found us in, we were all gone out of the way: we had fal'n among thieves; and between sin and Satan, we were robbed and wounded: and this *Samaritan* found us, and he cured us, and it cost him no less than his own blood. So desperate a disease is sin, that nothing will cure us, but the death of Christ. He found us shut up in sin, and were not able to get out; and then he roll'd away the stone for us, and knock'd off our fetters, and wrought deliverance for us. This was the misery of mans condition, that he was in a helpless condition, *Rom. 5. 6.* There was no possibility for us ever to recover our selves. Neither was there help in any other, beside Christ, *Act. 4. 12.* Heaven nor earth could not find out a way to deliver man, till God found out a way. And because heaven and earth could not find out a way, God and man must come together; and as he was God he must satisfie; and as he was man he must suffer; and so we must come out. He found us stinking in our grave as he did *Lazarus*. The stinking carrion doth not stink more than we did when Christ found us.

Secondly, If you consider what a *great salvation* he hath wrought for us. This will appear, if you consider *from what* he hath saved us; and *how* he hath saved us.

First, *From what he hath saved us.*

First, From the *Roaring-Lion*.

Secondly, From our *raging-lusts*.

Third-

Thirdly, From the *flaming furnace*.

Fourthly, From the *King of terrors*.

First, *From the roaring Lion*. So is our adversary, the Devil called, *1 Pet. 5.8*. This is he that Christ hath delivered us from. We were all in the Paw of this lion, and Christ came and delivered us from him. This is the *David* that slew the lion, and the bear, and saved us, when we were like to be destroyed. When Satan did think to triumph over Christ, then did Christ triumph over him. *Col. 2. 15*. All the powers of hell did combine together, and labored to give Christ the overthrow; they had brought him to the cross, and there triumph over him, and thought that then they had done all; and yet then did he overthrow them. Oh! what a mercy is this, to be delivered (not only from the bondage of *Egypt*, but) from the *spiritual Egypt*! *Col. 1. 13*. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness &c.* My Brethren, we were fast shut up in prison, in the prison of which Satan was the Jaylor: and there was no possibility of getting loose from him. We were laid up as slaves under him, and were led captive by him at his will. Now what praise do we owe to him, that hath delivered us from such a Tyrant as this! this is our deliverance, (*Act. 26. 18.*) to be turned from the power of Satan unto God. This hath Christ done for us: he hath delivered us from the power of Satan. We were once in his family, and did his work, *Eph. 2. 2, 3. Eph. 6. 12.* *They are called the rulers of the darkness of this world.* That is, poor ignorant souls, that

that were lying in our ignorance. And that not some of us onely, but all of us.

Secondly, *From our raging lusts.* As from the slavery of Satan, so from the dominion of sin. *Rom. 6. 14.* By Christ we are freed from the dominion of sin. My brethren, Christ doth not onely free us from the *damnation*, but from the *dominion* of sin. To be the servant of sin, is a most miserable slavery. What a mercy is it to be delivered from a master, whose work is *drudgery*; and whose wages is *destruction*! such a one is Satan. Would it not have pittied us to have seen the *poor man in the Gospel*, going up and down among the tombs, and doing nothing but cutting and wounding himself? such a one is every un sanctified person: they go up and down wounding of themselves. And though they feel not their wounds that sin gives them, yet there is a day coming, when (conscience being awakened) they will feel it. Do you know, my brethren, what the work is that sin sets us upon? it is to destroy our selves, *John 8.* the *Jews*, they plead that they were *free*; and what did our *Savior* tell them of making them free? Oh! but they were servants to their lusts, which was the greatest slavery, my brethren, to be under the power of a mans lusts, is a most perfect slavery. Do but look upon a sinner that hath an enlightned conscience, and see how he rends and tears, and is in a worse condition than the most woofull galley-slave that is in the world. And then he vows and covenants against his sin, and then his sin eggs him on again, and then to his

his conscience falls upon him. Oh, this is a sad condition! now this Christ hath delivered us from. Sin will *be in us*, but Christ hath promised that it shall not *reign in us*. And this is the blessed deliverance he hath wrought in us; and this he will perfect at the last day. And by the way, you may see and try whether you have any part in Christ or no. Why how may we know it? are you delivered from your sins? though sin be in you, is it there against your consent? if so, you are they whom Christ dyed for. But if it be in you in its dominion, you have no part nor portion in this matter. A man were better be the most perfect galley-slave in the world, than to be under the power of sin. Now this Christ hath delivered you from.

Thirdly, *From the flaming furnace*. This is another thing that Christ hath delivered you from. If the furnace heated to shew the terrible-ness of *Nebuchadnezzars* rage was so hot, that it burnt up those that cast in the three children; how hot is the furnace of the *Almighty God*, that is kindled by him, great *rivers of brimstone* running out into it, and the *breath of the Lord* doth kindle it? Oh, you know not what 'tis to be damned! you may know what 'tis to be sick or the like; but you know not what this word *DAMNATION* means. *2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, &c. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* When we see wicked men under

under the *Terrors of conscience*, how do they wish for death, that they might know what their torment is? as *Spira*, and *William Rogers*. Oh, can you tell what this terrible furnace is? this is that which Christ, hath delivered us from. When I consider what this gulf is, I cannot but wonder at my own and others stupidity, that we are not ever! ever, praising the Lord! if the terror of the Lord be so great, that when he doth let out but a drop of it upon a poor creature, how terrible is all that wrath, the treasure of that wrath that is laid up for the ungodly! *Rom. 2. 5. 8. 9. Jam. 5. 3.* Those wicked rich men, there, they had, as they thought, heaped up treasures of riches by oppressing the poor: but the *Apostle* tells them they heaped up *treasures of wrath*. And this we were all born to, had not Christ cut off the entail. O man, woman, canst think of burning for ever in the fire of the Lords wrath, and not be praising the Lord that thou art yet out of hell? O bless the Lord, that delivered thee from so great a death: and hath endured such torments that thou mayst be set free. He did bear the rod of *Gods wrath* that thou mayst be saved to all eternity. If Christ had not been, where had we been! as the Son of God, coming among the three children, saved them from burning; so 'tis here: 'tis Christs coming hath saved us from burning in this flaming furnace. How terrible this furnace is, you may see, *Rev. 14. 10.* *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and*

he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb: and the smok of their torment ascenderh up for ever and ever. And they have no rest day nor night. O methinks the very sight of this furnace at a distance should startle our Souls, and make us lift up our hands, and eyes, and souls and praise the Lord. O methinks we that are the redeemed of the Lord, we should stand together about the pit, and look down, and lift up our hearts and praise the Lord.

Fourthly, *From the King of terrors.* He hath saved you, as from the *Devil*, so from *Death*. You know death is the mortal enemy of man, 'tis his great and last enemy: and now this enemy hath Christ destroyed, and delivered us from. And that both from the *sting* and *victory* of it.

(First,) *From the sting of death.* He hath not delivered us from the *stroke* of death, but he hath from the *sting* of death. When the *king* is out, the serpent may *bisse*, but he can not *sting*. Death will put you into the possession of that which Christ hath provided for you: so that death now is become desirable; now there is beauty in it. There is no friend can do that for you, that death can do. It will at once deliver you from sin and Satan, and give you a possession in heaven. The *Apostle*, looking upon death through Christ, longs for death: *having a desire to depart* &c. *Phil. 1. 23.* This great robber, through Christ is become our greatest gain. That which would have marr'd us for ever

ever, will now make us for ever. O that this *King of terrors* should become desirable, what a mercy is this ! O my beloved, did you know what the terrors of death be to an enlightned sinner, you would account it a great priviledge to be free from the sting of death. When all his comforts are taking their everlasting farewell of him, you would account it a great salvation then. When he shall feel death putting in his cold hands, and pulling out his heart, when he shall see his house of his body falling down about his ears, and he cannot stay there any longer ; and he sees the hell-hounds stand about him and waiting upon him to carry him to Hell, O what horror doth this work upon his heart ! this hath Christ delivered us from. Death hath left its sting in Christ, it can hurt us no longer.

(Secondly,) *From the victory of death.* It is true we must lye in the grave for some time ; yet Christ will fetch us thence, in *John. 6.* He promiseth no lesse than four times, *I will raise them up at the last day.* And this is the fruit of his purchase, *1 Thes. 4. 14.* Christs resurrection is a certain pledge of ours, so *1 Cor. 15.* Therefore let us not fear death, but embrace it with comfort : for death cannot touch our souls : it cannot deliver us over into the *second death.* *He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.* Therefore let us not fear death, but let our *flesh rest in hope.* When we dye, we may commit our bodies to the dust with comfort : it cannot hurt our souls ; and it shall keep our bodies but a little while neither.

God will receive our souls immediately; & our bodies after a little while. How doth Job comfort himself in this? *I know that my redeemer liveth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, &c.* Thus may we triumph over death, that in this flesh we shall see God. And though death for the present do make such work upon us, and cast us into the grave, yet the earth will be but the mould wherein we shall receive a glorious body, so that death shall conduce to our great advantage. This is no little victory, to be able to triumph with the *Apostle*. *O death, where is thy victory?* This is no small privilege. Bless your redeemer for this privilege. What a privilege well this be, when all the Sons and daughters of God shall be brought forth and made to stand up before him? then it shall appear that the grave was not able to hold them. Then will they triumph, and sing songs of salvation, when they shall set their feet upon their last enemy, death.

Secondly, It will appear what blessed news this is, if you consider, *how he hath saved you*. He hath saved you two ways, by *might*, and by *merit*.

First, *By merit*, Brethren, your salvation cost your redeemer dear, no less a price than his own invaluable blood. O believer, look upon thy self, art not thou a worthless thing to be redeemed with the price of Christs blood? O how should we admire the goodness of Christ here? we are not worthy that Christ should spend one of his *thoughts* upon us, much less

less that he should spend his *blood* for us.

Secondly, *By might*, my brethren, it was absolutely requisite for our salvation, that our redeemer. as he should be of infinite *merit*, so of infinite *might*. If he had not been of infinite *merit*, he could never have been purchaser of heaven for us. The soul of one man is more worth than a whole world: and then what worth or value must that be of, that is able to buy a world of souls? and yet this purchaser must be able to buy heaven too: and this hath Christ done for us. Could heaven and earth have done this? no, no, it would have broken them all if they had done it. But now Christ hath done all for us: and therefore he must be of infinite merit. And not infinite in merit onely but might too: for he was to bear all the wrath of God, and to bring us off with victory. If the wrath of Gods finger be so intolerable, that it makes poor creatures to cry out under it, what is the wrath of his loins? and if the wrath of God against one man is so great, what is his wrath against so many men?

VVhen the price was laid down, the devil would not yield up his hold, till Christ must come and cast him down, and pluck us from him. And therefore it was necessary that our redeemer should be of infinite power. *He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil.* Ah brethren, we may behold the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, bowing himself as *Sampson* did, and pulling down the house about his enemies, and carrying away the posts and all, and setting us free. This is our *Sampson* that hath carryed all away, and

destroyed our enemies for us. The price was sufficient to satisfy the justice of God for us: but when the price was paid, and paid to God; then Satan would not let us go: and therefore he must be overcome too.

First Use, Is it such blessed news that to us is born a Savior? then my brethren, let this stir you up to *joy and thankfulness* for this salvation. O let me hear you say with *Mary*, *my soul doth magnifie the Lord, my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior, Luke 1. 46.* Brethren, methinks you should now meet your redeemer with songs of salvation. Methinks you should come forth to meet him, as they did *Saul and David*, when they returned from their victory, *the women came out, singing and dancing &c. and they answered one another as they played, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.* Thus should you meet your Redeemer. You should go forth to meet him as *Miriam* and the women with her with timbrels and with dancings, *and sing unto the Lord, Exod. 15. 20. 21.* Oh brethren, with what joyful heart should you welcome Jesus Christ your Savior! this is glad tidings to all them that are saved by him. Blessed be God that giveth us cause to triumph in him. 'Tis true, in many other things it goes sad with us: but here is cause always for us to triumph in Christ, for the Spiritual deliverance that he hath wrought for you; which is a sure pledge that Christ will deliver you in outward respects. How blessed a time was the year of *Jubile* to the slaves that were in bondage

dage? how did they reckon every day and week till it came? how glad was that *sound* that sounded their deliverance? methinks I see the prison doors open, and the prisoners running out and crying, *salvation to our God.* O methinks nothing but the songs of salvation should be heard in your tabernacles. O let not complaining be heard for outward calamities. VVhat are those outward flea-bitings to that which our Savior hath delivered us from? go home and blesse the Lord: and what ever ill news you hear, let this comfort your heart that Christ hath made such a deliverance for you.

Second Use, Is it such blessed news &c. then this *reproves our unthankfulness for Christ*, and the news of Christ in the Gospel. Oh brethren, how is it that the praise of our redeemer is no more in our hearts, and no more heard in our mouths? how is it that we can be so unmindful of, and unthankful for this Saviour? hath God sent us a Saviour, and shall not we be thankful for him? It is a great sin to be unthankful for his *creatures*; but how much more to be unthankful for his *Christ*? he hath given you Christ, and what can he give you more? how is it that you are so seldome in blessing the Lord for this mercy? *blesse the Lord, O my soul,* (saith David) *and forget not all his benefits*: that is, none of his benefits. If God had given you all this worlds goods, and had not given you *Christ*, what would it have done for you? what had it been, but a smooth and pleasant way to hell? what if the

Lord had given you honor, and made your brethrens theaf to bow before yours; and had not given you Christ; what good would it have done you? if a man were condemned at *London*, to be hang'd drawn and quartered, and were to be brought down into the Country to be executed, and all his way should be strowed with rushes, and he attended with Musicians, what would all this have done him? O what should we have done, if Christ had had not step'd in and saved us! none could have redeemed man but Christ. Heaven and Hell, and the Earth and the Sea would have said it is not in me: all the things in the world could never have satisfied for our sins. Wilt thou look to thy brethren? wilt thou look to the angels; they could not do it. The Spirits of just men made perfect could not save themselves: none could do it but Christ: and can you be unmindful of this? the Heavens and the Earth will be astonished at this, if you are not thankful for it.

There are two things that will heighten this sin.

First, Because Christ hath given you *so many helps* to it.

Secondly, Because thankfulness is *all that he expects* from us.

First, Because he hath *given us so many helps*. All the calls and invitations of the Gospel are as so many helps to this duty. But more than these, he hath appointed a *special day*, and a *special ordinance*.

First, A *special day*. The *Sabbath day*. Where-

Wherefore was this day changed? but that you may be mindful of this mercy?

(Secondly,) *A special Ordinance.* The *Sacrament of the Supper* is appointed upon this account that we might remember this mercy to our souls.

Secondly, It is much aggravated by this, because *this is all that he expects* from you, for all that he hath suffered for you. Christ hath done and suffered beyond all you can conceive, or I can expresse to you: and what Homage doth he now expect from you? nothing but that you should be thankful to him. And will you be unthankful now for this mercy? This is that he expects by way of requital and return, that you be thankful, Had the Lord required some great thing of you, or some hard condition, if he would have dyed for you and redeemed you, would you not have done it? and how much more, now he hath done it, and and requires no more but this, that you be thankful? had you lain but one million of years in hell, with what gladness would you have heard that sound, that he would have redeemed you? would you have stood upon the terms? no, no, any terms then should have served.

Third Use, Then prepare to receive your *Saviour*. Oh if he be come, take heed that you receive him in. Let him not complain of you as he did of his native Country-men the *Jews*, that he came unto his own, and his own received him not. When this news come, that there was a *Savior born*, one would have
thought

thought that all the world should have received him with triumph : but there was no room for him in all the world, but he was thrust out in the manger. Let it not be so with you.

Question, But how shall we receive him? I shall shew you *whither* and *how*.

First. *Whither* you shall receive him, receive him *into your hearts*; not in your *stal*, as he was at first, but into your *parlour*, into your hearts. Your *parlour*, is but a *stable*. Thou mayst wonder that Christ will accept of thy heart, send the key of your hearts to Christ, let him take his choice where to lye : give him the upper room in your hearts.

Secondly, *How*, or *after what manner* you should receive him.

(First,) As the *Centurion* did, *humbly*. *I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof*. So should you receive him, with a deep sence of your everlasting unworthiness. Receive him with a lively sence of your sins, that you have wronged him. This is a right receiving of Christ, when he is received penitently. Thus did that woman entertain him : and Christ liked better of this, than of the *Pharisee*. *Luke 7*. She received Christ in her heart. This is the entertainment, that he is well pleased with : receive him thus, and this will be acceptable to him. Though thou hast nothing at all in thee, but the sence of thy nothingness, Christ will be sure to accept of this.

(Secondly,) Receive him, as *Zachau* did, *Joyfully*. When Christ call'd him down from the

the tree, and told him that salvation was come to his house, how glad was the man's heart? *Luke 19.* O methinks I see with what unspeakable joy he received him. He thought not of *Christ's* coming to his house: his highest ambition was that he might have a sight of *Christ*: and *Christ* sees and takes notice of it, and tells him that *Salvation was come to his house.* O methinks, I should see thee looking as he did, when *Christ* will come this way where thou art. Why, now he is come in his ordinances, now receive him joyfully, take him into thy heart. Let thy joy break out, as the waters of *Jordan* did; or as when the Lord broke up the fountain of the great deep. Brethren, one would think, that one should need no arguments to persuade miserable captives to receive a *Savior*. O how welcome would such offers be to them that are in captivity? Brethren, if ever you have seen your lost condition without *Christ*, you cannot but receive him when he is offered to you. O methinks this Name of *J E S U S* should be marrow to your bones, and wine to your hearts, and Music to your ears. Oh as God hath, so do you give him a name above every name. This blessed name, the name of *Jesus*, methinks it should be as oynment poured forth upon you, giving a sweet smell.

Thirdly. Receive him as old *Simeon* did, believingly. You must clasp the arms of your faith about him. O how sweetly did old *Si-*

mean clasp him in his arms? but you must think that he did clasp him more gladly in his heart. If you will but entertain him, Christ and Salvation come to every one in this house.

Fourthly, Take him *submissively*. So as to be subject to him. He hath wrought out Salvation for you; therefore let him rule over you.

A Thankf-



A Thanksgiving Sermon,
preached on the 10th. of
July, 1665. at Mr. R. M's
by Mr. *Joseph Alleine*, &c.

Pfalm 147. 20.

*He hath not dealt so with any Nation—
praise ye the Lord.*

THe sweet *Pfalmist* of *Israel*, a man
skilful in praises, doth begin and end
this *Pfalm* with *Allelujah*. In the bo-
dy of the *psalm* he doth set forth the
mercy of God, both toward all creatures in ge-
neral in his common providence; and towards
his Church in particular. So in this close of
the *psalm*: He sheweth his word unto Jacob,
and his statutes to *Israel*. He hath not dealt
so with any nation. In the original, 'tis he
hath not dealt so with every nation. That is,
with any nation. In

In the *Text* you may observe a *position*, and a *conclusion*. A *position*. And that is, that God deals in a *singular way of mercy* with his people above all other people. And then the *Conclusion*, *praise ye the Lord*.

Doct. That God deals in a *singular way of mercy* with his people, and therefore expects *singular praises* from his people.

God expects of his people, return of *praise* according to the *mercy* that they have received. *Hezekiah*, was a man not altogether forgetful of the *mercy* of God; yet he rendered not according to the *benefit* he had received from God. *Christ* expects that (*Math. 5. 47.*) his disciples should do more than others: that seeing they do receive more from him in a way of *mercy* they should return him the more *praise* and *glory*.

The *Application* (*my Brethren*) is unto you. If God do expect that his people should do more than others, see that you do accordingly. Let this be a provocation to you, my Brethren, to lift up your *hearts* and *voices* in the praises of the Lord. What people doth the Lord expect such returns from, as from this people? he hath not dealt so with any people, therefore he expects praises from you more than from any other people. Therefore consider with me what the Lord hath done for you more than for any others. If we look upon our selves as *common members of the nation*, and so God hath done more for us than for any others. Or if we look upon our selves with reference to the particular place to which we belong,

long, and so God hath done more for us than he hath done for others, or, if we look upon our selves as to our particular persons, God hath dealt with us so, as he hath not dealt with any other people.

First, Let us look upon the mercies of God to us and the nation in common. Surely we may say with the *Psalmist*, he hath not dealt so with any nation. This is a land which he hath set his heart upon, and watched over it from one end of the year to the other. I will not speak of the outward mercies of this nation, though we have a Land flowing with milk and honey. I will speak to spiritual blessings. Oh, let it be remembred by us, what spiritual mercies we have had! how soon did the Lord plant the Gospel with us? and how long hath it continued to us? what would the world have been without the Gospel? what is the world without the Sun, but the beginning of Hell as it were? I may say of you blessed are your eyes, for they see: and blessed are your ears, for they hear. *Psa. 89. 15.* Blessed are the people that hear the joyful sound, they shall walk in the light of his countenance, and in his name shall they rejoyce. None can tell what a blessing the Gospel is. Blessed be God who hath brought to light immortality through the Gospel. Oh! think upon our fathers who went into the land of forgetfulness by thousands and had none to teach them. And how long hath the Gospel continued here? we have it from good History, that in the primitive times the Gospel was planted here. And when

when the *Gospel* was again *clouded* by the invasion of the bloody *Saxons*, that were *heathens*; God was pleased to send *Ministers* again to propagate the *Gospel*, which was about 600 years after *Christ*, when *Austin* was sent over from *Rome*. And suddenly after; God raised up famous *preachers* of the *Gospel*.

And though God was pleased to suffer another *cloud* to cover the *Gospel*, when *Anti-christ* prevailed; God raised up from one time to another, some to *resist* against him, and to *seal* it with their blood.

But I shall more particularly speak of these signal mercies of God to our nation. God hath made this nation signal in mercy. First, In the multitude of her converts. Secondly, In the honour of her Sabbaths. Thirdly, In the Crown of her Martyrs. Fourthly, The glory of her Ministers. Fifthly, Her singular and choice deliverances.

First, In the multitude of her converts. Herein God hath blessed this nation above other nations, and herein we have cause to bless the Lord. There is but little of the profession of Godliness in other nations, to what there is in this nation, 'tis a great glory to any place or people to have a multitude of converts born to God out of it. This was the commendation of those places, that this, and that man was born there, *Psalms* 87. 4, 5, 6. This is cause of singular joy and praise which they were wont to sing to the Lord in those days with instruments of Musick.

Secondly, In the honour of her Sabbaths.

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This is that, my Brethren, whete in the *Lord* hath vouchsafed *singular* favor to *this nation*. Oh, bless *God* for honoring this nation with his *Sabbaths* as he hath done: that they should be so sanctified as they be. *Nehemiah* reckoneth this as a singular mercy of *God* to them. So *Isaiah* 58. 13. *Thou shalt call the Sabbath a delight, and shalt honor it.* If you honour them, they will be an honour and blessing to you.

Thirdly, *In the Crown of her Martyrs.* Ah Brethren, this is the Crown of glory upon the head of *England*, that *God* should raise up so many *Martyrs* in this kingdome, of our flesh, and kindred: that there should be so many caught up like *Elijah* in *fiery Chariots* to heaven. Who can tell of what effect their prayers and blood hath been for our good? so that according to that holy prophesie of *Lattimer*, when going to the stake, *God* hath lighted up such a light by this as shall never be put out:

Fourthly, *In the glory of her ministers.* Brethren, I confesse my self not worthy to speak to you of the worth of this mercy. However vain men have accounted them the *off-scouring of the world*, &c. yet you whose hearts are touched with the sence of spiritual blessings, you must needs know and understand, the *Ministers of Christ* not onely to be the glory of the nation, but are so far honored as to be said to be the *glory of Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 23. Oh, blesse the *Lord* this day, that he hath blessed *this nation* with such an unspeakable

ble blessing. Do not undervalue such a mercy. 'Tis a *Covenant-gift* of *Christ* to his *Church*. He gave some *Apostles* some *Pastors* and *Teachers*. And 'tis part of the grand *Legacy* that *Christ* hath bequeathed to believers in the *Gospel*; whether *Paul* or *Apollo* all are yours. And though *God* hath now observed this mercy ye we may not forget former mercies. Neither hath *God* left them unuseful, you know; neither to your nor others souls. In this respect I may boldly say, *God* hath not dealt so with any nation. Those that have had experience intravelling other Countries have sadly bewailed this, how little heat and vigor there is in the labor of the *Ministers* abroad, in other nations for the most part.

Fifthly, *In her singular and choise deliverances*. Herein hath *God* dealt with us signally. I would that all those mercies might be remembred by us this day to our fore-fathers: for they were our mercies though not in our days. Oh, what a mercy was it that *God* did deliver us from the *Spanish invasion*; This mercy was our mercy and therefore we may not forget it. And then when they thought to do that by plot, what they could not do by force in the powder-plot, when they were like to cut off the neck of our nation at one blow. *God* was pleased you know to prevent it just at the nick of time, and bring it upon their own heads. Oh, what cause have we to bless the *Lord*, who saved us from so cruel a bondage, as neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? Oh forget not such a mercy wherein *God* hath
broken

broken the yoke and brought in that light that he hath commanded into the nation.

Secondly, If we com *nearer*, & look upon the *Place of our desires*, you shall find that he hath not dealt so with *any other place*. If you consider it, in the *long continuance of your Ministry*. The *powerful success of the Gospel*. In the *peace and unity of its professors*. In the *plenty and variety of its provision*. In the *strange preservation of your liberty*. In *serving you by your enemies Counsel*. In *eminent and gracious returns of your prayers*. in *keeping you from the Ecclesiastical Courts*. In your *glorious Salvations and deliverances*. Put these nine things together, and tell me whether God hath dealt so with any place as with this place.

First, *In the long continuance of your Ministry*. Forty years was God striving with *Israel*, but many more years hath God been striving with *Taunton* in the powerful preaching of the Gospel. We read of Gods comming the *first and second year*, and finding no fruit, would have cut it down the *third*, had not the *dresser* prayed for it. But 'tis not *three years*, but *threescore years* that God hath come waiting on *Taunton*, notwithstanding all their praying, and their great unprofitableness for the greatest part of them. I beseech you think of it. Is it a little mercy? there are many of you that have been *born and bred* under the powerful preaching of the Gospel. Look upon many other places, and how many may you see left to *blind guides*? Oh, bless God that you have not been bred up under such

Ministers, and in such places. It was the lot of many, and it might have been your lot to have been brought up there.

How many places may you look upon again, where there have been excellent *Ministers*, and they have been flocked to from all about : but *God* hath put out those lights, and now if you come there, you shall scarce find the very *footSteps* of Religion. And *God* might have done so to you, but *God* hath sent you one Minister after another, one out of one Country, another out of another for you. Oh blesse the *Lord* for it.

Secondly, *In the powerful success of the Gospel.* True it is, and sadly to be bewailed, the Gospel hath not had so desired an efficacy : but however, we must not forget *Gods* signal and singular mercy to this place, in that he hath brought *so many* to the profession of his Gospel. Oh, how many Parishes are there where professors are so thin, that they are for *signs and wonders*, to be pointed at? Oh blesse the *Lord* that he hath cast *your lines* in that place, where there are so many to strengthen your hands. How doth *David* bemoan himself in the want of this mercy, that he dwelt in the tents of *Kedar* ! you might have lived out in those places and Parishes where you might have had none to help you.

Thirdly, *In the peace and unity of its professors.* Here in *God* hath been singular in his mercy. This is a mercy not slightly to be valued. Do but look abroad into other Cities and Towns, and see what work there hath been by

by the breaches that have been made one upon another. Oh, do but consider the mischief of *strife and contention*, and you will be raised to praise, *Jam. 3. 16. Where envying and strife is, there is every evil work.* Oh bless the Lord that the hearts of believers have been made one in this place, *Psal. 133. 1. How good and beautiful is it to see Brethren dwell together in unity?* bless the Lord you his people, because the Lord hath blessed his people with peace.

Fourthly, *In the plenty and variety of its provision.* Oh remember this this day, and forget not how God hath provided for you all along: and that at that day, when you did account that all was cut off. How little did we dream of such a mercy? had any told us then of these things, we should have replied as that Lord did, *behold if the Lord would make windows in heaven might this thing be?* Ah Brethren, should it have been told you beforehand that for so many years after that fatal day you should spend so many *Sabbaths* in the worship of God, and so many *Sermons* in one Sabbath and so many *Ministers* sent to you, and so many *Sacraments* to feed you as you have had, you would have been ready to say, *if the Lord should open windows in heaven could this thing be?* and yet all this God hath done for you. Oh bless the Lord for this mercy!

Fifthly, *In the strange preservation of your Liberty.* Herein hath God been singular in his mercy to you; hath not Christ fulfilled his word to you, *he that loseth his life for my sake,* (so he that loseth his liberty for my sake) shall

keep it? you have hazarded your liberties and have kept them. Many have declined their duty to preserve their liberty: but blessed be God that you have adventured your liberty and God hath kept you in safety. Indeed, I can give you no time of your liberty: but I can assure you that if you lose it for him, you shall gain by your losse. Methinks Christ says to us as to his disciples, *when I sent you forth without shoes or scrip, lacked ye any thing? and they said, nothing:* so here, when you have gone forth adventuring your liberties for Christ, have you lost them? you must say, no.

Sixthly, *In serving you by your enemies Counsel.* How visibly hath God turned what the enemy intended for evil, to be good to us? so we may say as Joseph to his Brethren, *as for you you thought evil to me, but God meant it for good.* You know how they have despightfully removed the Magistracy of the place, but behold how much the Lord hath turned it for your good! had they set up a Magistracy, it had been the losse of your liberty. They had a spightful eye upon you; and it was thought that Taunton long ago would have been too hot for her inhabitants; & yet behold what freedom and liberty we have lived in! behold, *men curse, but God hath blessed us the more.* Oh, how strange a thing is this that you should eat and drink in peace! and go forth and come in in peace! that you should attend the ordinances in peace.

Seventhly, *In eminent and gracious returns to your prayers.* Brethren, this is not to be for-

forgotten this day. Returns of *prayer*, do certainly call for great returns of *praise*. It hath been observed by those that have bin longer with you, than I, that they never remember that *God* was earnestly sought unto for any particular mercy in this place but he did send a visible return; except once, when if *God* had sent you an answer according to your prayer, it had been the hazzarding of the people of *God* in this place. So that I may say to you, what people is like to you, who have *God* so near unto you in all that you have called upon him for?

Eighthly, In keeping you from the Ecclesiastical Courts. This is a mercy that we should be mindful of. Indeed all along the Church-malignant, have been one of the persecuting enemies of the Church of *God*. Witness the Scribes and Pharises. Witness the Jews, who were all a long the stirrers up of men against the Church. And so in divers prelati- cal men of late. Nay, and at this day, through the rigour of these Courts, especially in other Counties, many stand excommunicated: many are threatned with Writs, and some taken and cast into prison for term life, unless *God* raise som unexpected means. Now of all places one would have thought that we should have been dragged to prison by them. And yet you see how *God* hath preserved us.

Ninthly, In your glorious Salvations and deliverances. Oh, my Brethren remember and forget not the dealings of *God* with this place. Let *God* hear of it throughout your praises now

This day, what he hath done for you, in saving you with such *wonderful Salvation*. The Sword, and Famine, and Plague, and Fire have been upon you to consume you; and yet you are here to bless the Lord at this day, methinks the Lord calls upon you as in *Micah. 6. 5.* *O my people, remember now what Balaak King of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the Son of Beor answered him, from Shittim unto Gilgal, that you might know the righteousness of the Lord.* Such is the Language of the Lord to you. Remember now what thine enemies consulted against thee: how they had gathered themselves against thee and besieged thee, and did resolve to devour thee with thy children, and not to leave thee one stone upon another. O remember my people when your houses were on fire, and the Plague in the street, and the widows crying, and the children fatherless crying. Ah! pitiful condition. O remember now how I have helped thee, that thou mightest know that *I am the Lord thy Savior.*

Thirdly, If we come yet *nearer*, and look upon our selves with reference to our *particular persons*, as we are *Christians*, and so God hath done more for us than he hath done for any others beside, therefore praise you the Lord.

And here I am in such a field that I know not the way out, you are the members of *Christ*, the children of your father which is in heaven: what hath God done for you! *O you that fear the Lord, praise the Lord.* You may stand amazed to see what the Lord hath wrought for your souls. This is the Life of all, when
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you can remember the everlasting loving kindness of God to you. O friends consider now, you that are the *Lords peculiar people*; consider what God hath done for you above all other people.

Consider he hath made you, *the people of his choice. The pillars of his name. The vessels of his glory. The Temples of his presence. The Trumpets of his praise. The men of his Counsel. The Jewels of his Crown. The Inheritors of his Kingdom.* Herein God hath done more for you then for others: and should not you do more than others? look upon these things, and see then whether you should not do more for God than others.

First, *You are the people of his choice*, when others are but the *refuge*. You are the *pillars of his name*, when others are but broken and uselesse *pot-sheards*. You are the *vessels of his glory*, when others are the *vessels of his wrath*. You are the *Temples of his presence*, when others are the *styes of uncleannesse*. You are the *Trumpets of his praise*, when others are the instruments of *unrighteousness*. You are the men of his *Counsel*, when others are strangers and *Aliens*. You are the *Jewels of his Crown*, when others are but the *drosse* and lumber. You are the *Inheritors of his Kingdom*, when others are the *Sons of perdition*. Look over these things, and see what God hath done for you more than he hath done for others.

But methinks, I see something that will spoil and damp all. Oh, says the poor soul, I am afraid that this is not *my right*. I should bless
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the Lord indeed were I sure that all this were mine. How shall I know that this is my condition?

Now lest *unbeleif* and distrust should damp your Joy, and spoyl your work of praise, let me shew you to whom I speak: and let you know, how you may know that you are those that I speak to. Let me shew you in two marks, whereby you may come certainly to know it: you may know it by your *Cares*, and by your *Comforts*. What is your chief care and your chief comfort? look upon your selves and judge of your selves by these two marks.

First, *By your Cares*. Brethren, what is the chief care of your heart? what is it that lies with most weight upon your heart? or that you do prosecute with most care in your life? you are the people of God if this be your great care, to *please God*, *eschew sin*, and *save your selves*. If this be your great care, then you are the men. Methinks this should not be so hard to be discerned. Dost thou not know what is the *main scope* and drift of thy life?

First, *To please God*. If this be your great endeavour whether you are present or absent, alone or in company, that you may please God, this is the true disposition of Gods servants. Do you study to watch over your hearts as in Gods sight? and carry it in your lives as of sincerity and in the sight of God? 2 Cor. 1. 12. and 2. 17. Is your labor of love, and work of faith (that is, working faith) and
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your patience of hope (in bearing the Crosse) not in vain-glory but in sincerity? do you study so to walk as to approve your hearts to God, that you endeavor to please him? that you might do those things that are pleasing in his sight? then know and be assured that you are the people to whom this doth belong. If God say well done, you have your hearts desire, let the world say what they will to you.

Secondly, *To eschew sin.* This was *Jobs* character, that he was a man *fearing God and eschewing sin*, *Job* 1. 8. This was *Dauids* mark, that he did not regard iniquity in his heart *Psalms* 66. 8. This was that did comfort *Paul*, as the sure evidence of his sincerity, though he did evil many times, being overtaken with temptation, yet he allowed it not, *Rom.* 7. 18. Brethren, what is your greatest fear? do you study *duty* more than *safety*? do you fear *sin* more than *danger*? do you keep up a constant watch against sin, all sin, little sins, secret sins, heart sins, especially are you afraid of your *constitution-sin*, your *sweet sin*? And do you prosecute against this with double diligence?

Thirdly, *To save your souls.* This was *Pauls* care, *1 Cor.* 9. latter end. *I therefore so run; not as uncertainty: so fight I, not as one that beareth the Air: but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a cast away.* He was one that was in good earnest he did run as one in a race: and fight as one for his life: and all lest he should come

come short of that salvation, that he had preached to others. So *Phil.* 3. 13, 14. *One thing I do—I press toward the mark for the prize of the high-calling.* His eye was upon the Crown of Life. And this is so far from *sinful mercenariness*, that 'tis made the condition of eternal Life: that they are such who by *patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory honor, immortality; eternal Life, Rom.* 2. 7. Now Brethren, what say you to this? what is your great care, and what is your great enquiry that you enquire after? Is it what shall I do to be rich or great? Is it with the carnal company, *who will shew us any good?* any outward good, a good bargain or the like, or with him, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* And with the convert in the *Acts*, *Sir, what must I do to be saved?* how shall I secure my soul? what can you say to this! *Do you first and above all seek the Kingdom of God?*

Secondly, As you may know it by your cares. so by your comforts. Is it the great comfort of your lives to *converse with God?* and is he your portion and treasure? a mans treasure may be known by his heart. Is it that that doth yeild the sweetest comfort and content to your hearts? are your sweetest hours, the hours that you spend with *God?* do you never more enjoy your selves, than when you most enjoy *God.* And is this your ordinary frame, except in a time of temptation, or under desertion? and when 'tis otherwise are you out of your center, and cannot be quiet till you be otherwise? Is *God* your
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your refuge and riches, your portion, your principal choice, your Treasure? and do you bleſs your ſelves in him? can you ſay there is more gladneſs in your hearts, in the favor and enjoyment of God, than when *the Corn and Wine and Oyl increaſeth*? do you indeed prefer *a day in his Courts*, before *a thouſand* in the pleaſures of the wicked, *and tents of wickedneſs*? If it be thus with you *habitually*, then you bear upon you the certain characters of Gods people. And rejoyce you with *joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, and boaſt your ſelves in him: for all the things that I ſhall ſpeak of, belong to you. And now if you find it thus with you, then apply to your ſelves theſe following comforts. And bleſſe your ſelves in your God, he hath done more for you, than for any others.

First, *You are the people of his choice*, when others are but the *refuſe*. O my Brethren, I may ſay to you, as God ſaid to *Iſrael* by *Moses*, *Deut. 7. 6. For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, the Lord thy God hath choſen thee to be a ſpecial people to himſelf, above all people of the earth.* This is your caſe, I beſeech you Chriſtians, erect you faith, and let not your conſideration be idle. Hear him ſpeaking thus to you, as in *Exod. 19. 5. You ſhall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine.* Ah, beloved I muſt call upon you to rejoyce in the Lord: and again muſt I call upon you to rejoyce: and lift up your heads before the Lord; you are the choſen veſſels of the Lord. What! will
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you hear these things with low Affections and common hearts. Do you believe or do you not? If you do not, why are you called *Christians*? If you do, Oh what an extasie of Joy should your hearts be raised too? Oh look upon the miserable condition of the perishing world, the reprobate world! look down, and see what burnings do betide them! better for them that they had never been born. And shall it but a little affect you that God hath separated you from them all? I may say of you, as the *Apostle* doth with thankfulness of his *Thessalonians*, 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. *We are bound to give thanks to God for you Brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation.* Oh how should you bless the Lord for his eternal purpose, which he purposed toward you, *Eph.* 1. 4. O let free grace now be exalted, hath God made you. (I mean believers) to be the choice of his heart, and will you hear this with little and low affections, as if it did but little concern you, when you are the people of Gods choise? Oh how did *Christ* bless the Lord for you! and should not you for your selves? he was transported with Joy for this, *Luke.* 10. 21. *He rejoyced in spirit and said Father I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast made them known to babes.* And he calls upon his Disciples to rejoyce in this: rejoyce not in this that the devils are made subject to you: but rejoyce in that your names are written in heaven. Your names are written in the lambs book of life, while others are written in
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the Earth. What! are there, but *few* chosen in the world, and are you *some* of those *few*? and will you not rejoyce in this? Oh rejoyce in this. God speaks of your priviledges as if they were already come, *Heb. 12. 22.* But you are come to mount Sion, to the Church of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly, and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant.

Secondly, You are the pillars of his name, when others are but broken, useles pot sheards. My brethren, God hath raised you up for quite another end, than he hath others. You know what the Lord speak of Pharaoh, *Exod. 9. 16.* And in every deed for this cause have I raised thee up, to shew in thee my power, that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. That God might shew in him the power of his wrath and severity. But now beloved, you are raised up for another end, that you may bear up the name of God, and be the instruments of the glory of God before all men. God hath no active glory from the rest of the world. But you are the people whom God hath raised up on purpose for his name and for his glory, *2 Sam. 18. 18.* Absalom, we read had taken and reared a pillar for himself: and he called the pillar after his own name. Thus hath the Lord God erected you as pillars to keep up his name in remembrance. For the unreasonable
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Creatures they cannot, but by dumb and silent hints to man, praise their Creator. For the ungodly, they do the contrary, they dishonor his name. And were it not for you, the *name of God* would not be kept up in the world. God would be cast out, and the very remembrance of him out of his own world. Oh my brethren, I may say of you, of every one of you that are believers, as God speak concerning *Paul*, *Act. 9. 15.* *You are chosen vessels to bear Gods name before the world.* Alas! for others! of how little use are they in the world? this is a miserable case to be of no use; better to have *no being* than to be of *no use*. How contemptible doth the *Lord* speak of that wicked King *Coniah*? he calls him a *despised broken Idol*. Such a kind of one is every un sanctified person; they are but as broken useless pot-sheards: let them be so great as they will, yea they are worse than for no purpose, they are for bad purposes. Oh, what cause have you then to bless the *Lord*, that you are the people that must bear up his name?

Thirdly, You are *the vessels of his glory*; when others are the vessels of his *wrath*; you are not as others, vessels of wood and stone; but you are all vessels of *gold and silver*: vessels not to *dishonor*, but to *honor*. Vessels *sanctified, and made meet for the Masters use, and prepared for every good work*, *2 Tim. 2. 20, 21.* Ah brethren, read (and rejoyce with trembling) what is written, *Rom. 9. 18.* onward, where the Apostle lively sets forth this great distinction.

He hath mercy on whom he will have mer-

ty, and whom he will he hardeneth. Hath not the potter power over the clay to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor? What if God willing to shew his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory? Ah brethren, when others are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, you are vessels of mercy, vessels of glory made for this blessed use and service that you may be the instruments of Gods glory and mercy before the world: that God may take you and single you out at the great day, when you shall be severed as a man severeth the sheep from the goats. God shall take you and single you out before the world, and tell the world, what a God can do for a poor creature: to make you the monuments of his magnificence and bounty, to shew how he could exalt the dust of the earth. This is the use you serve for in the world. Do not live as if you were made for little things, and for little use: you are made for this use, that you should be vessels prepared to have the infinite fulness of God pouring into you, as vessels standing by for the same purpose, and running over to all eternity. When you shall be ever full and running over with the glory of God. When the *Al-sufficiency* of God shall be for ever emptying it self into you. How is it that God hears no more of you? hath he done so for any other? no, he hath prepared them for vessels of wrath on whom he will be pouring out his wrath to all eternity. Both of

these vessels were made of one sort of clay; and yet see what difference here is that *free-grace* hath made.

Fourthly, You are *the Temples of his presence*, when others are the *styes of uncleanness*, *God doth live in you, and walk in you*: this is the honor that God doth put upon you. The *Apostle* tels you, that you are *Gods house*, *Heb. 3.* And God sayes of you his *spiritual house*, as he did of the *Typical house*, (for the sence belongs more to the thing typified, then to the house,) *1 Kings 9. 3.* God says of every believer as of that house, *I have hallowed this house to put my name there for ever. And mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.* Thus doth God for thee believer, that art his house. Or as it is in, *2 Kings 21. 7.* *In this house and in Jerusalem which I have chosen out of all the Tribes of Israel will I put my name for ever.* That was but a *typical Temple*, you are the *real Temples of the holy Ghost*, *1 Cor. 6. 19.* *What, know you not that your body is the Temple of the holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? every believer, is a real Temple wherein God is especially present, so 1 Cor. 3. 16.* *Know you not that you are the Temple of God? and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* Brethren, if you indeed believe, methinks this priviledge should be matter of unspeakable Joy to you. What art thou of no meaner use then this to be a habitation of God through the spirit? What art thou a Temple for God to dwell in? will God make of this Soul a Temple, where all
man-

manner of lusts have dwelt? and say of thy soul, here will I dwell for ever, this is my rest for I have desired it? Oh, adore the riches of Gods condescending grace! others are the vessels of uncleanness, the coffins of rottenness, in whom *Satan* hath set up his throne, 'tis true of every wicked man, what God sayes of *Coniah*, *Jer. 22. 28. He is a vessel wherein is no pleasure*, He is a vessel of the most noisome filthyness in the world.

Fifthly, You are *the trumpets of his praise*, when others are the instruments of *unrighteousness*. O what base use are the others put too, in their bonds of wickedness? to the worst of drudgery. They are the vessels of sin, and slaves of *Satan*, *Rom. 6. 16.* a miserable service! this is a miserable Master indeed! none have such miserable lives as those who have the work of sin to do. Why, would it not pity ones heart to see a company of poor Creatures laboring and toying for their own ruine? to see them tugging and sweating hard at, it were to carry together faggots for their own burning. This is that the wicked are doing, they are but treasuring up the wrath of God against themselves at the last day, they are but carrying together faggots and fewel for their own burning.

They labor and sweat all their days to pile up faggots and fewel, pile upon pile, to fill *Tophet* for their own burning. But you are not of this use, you are to be the Trumpets of Gods praise. Oh blessed employment! your work is the work of Angels, whiles others are

doing the work of Devils. *Isaiah 61.3. That they might be called trees of renown, the planting of the Lord; that he might be glorified. And so in another place, this people have I formed for myself, that they may be for my praise. Isa. 43. 7. I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.* When others shall be venting their malice and blasphemy against God, you shall be the silver Trumpets that shall be ever sounding forth the praises of the Lord.

Sixthly, *You are the men of his Counsel*, when others are *strangers* and *aliens*. You are no more *foreigners* and *strangers*, but fellow *Citizens* and of the household of God. You are the attendants of his person, you are of his privy Counsel. You are the friends of God. This was *Abrahams* priviledge, *Jam. 2.* That he was called the *friend of God*. Brethren, all the long and magnificent titles of all the *Monarchs* of the Earth do not signifie half so much as this that I am speaking to you. Now this is your prerogative. Henceforth I call you not servants but friends: and why so? because you are the men of his Counsel. The servant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but whatsoever I have heard of the Father that have I declared unto you. Herein *Christ* hath put a marvellous distinction between you and the men of the world, I may say of you as *Christ* of them, *blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* So *Psa. 147.* He sheweth his word unto Jacob, & his statutes un-

to Israel. *He hath not dealt so with any Nation.*

Seventhly, *You are the Jewels of his Crown*, when others are but the drosse and lumber. *And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts in the day when I make up my Jewels, Mal. 3. 17.* Beloved, you that are beleivers, you are the very glory of *Christ*. Every believer is as a pearl put into the Crown of *Jesus Christ*. The *Apostle* speaks of beleivers, of his converts, that they were a great Crown to him. He calls them *his Joy and Crown of rejoycing, Phil. 4. 1.* But this is but little that you should be your Ministers Crown: I tell you, you are *Christ's Crown and glory, Isa. 62. 3.* *Thou shalt also be a Crown of glory, in the hand of the Lord, and a Royal diadem in the hand of thy God.*

Eightly, *You are the inheritors of the Kingdome*, when others are the sons of perdition, *Luk. 12. 32.* *Fear not little flock, 'tis your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom, So come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdome prepared for you.* Who can utter the sweetness of that promise? 'tis our Saviors parting promise to his disciples at his last supper, *Luke 22. 28. 29, 30.* *You are they which have continued with me in my Temptations and I appoint unto you a Kingdome, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that you may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and sit upon thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* Oh how sweet are these words. Lay the mouth of Faith at these promises, and suck the sweetness of them. Look upon it as a reality,

that God prepared for you a Kingdome, 'tis so, why should God go to deceive you? and you may lay your claim to it boldly: God delights to see your humble boldness. *The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God, and if Sons, then heirs; joynt heirs with Christ: Heirs of his Kingdom.*

Fourthly, If you look upon your selves as prisoners, and so God hath done more for you then he hath for others. Ah Christians, this is the meaning of this day that you might celebrate the kindness of God to you in prison. O remember and forget not how signally God hath owned you. Brethren, 'tis your privilege and mercy that God hath given you hearts to own him in times of danger. And blessed be God he is not behind hand with you; he that owned you in your prison state. Brethren how hath God owned you in clearing your cause for which you are suffering here? If the Kingdome of heaven be promised to them that suffer for righteousness sake, then sure it is promised to you: for you are suffering here upon that account. And then for your call: how sweetly and joyfully did we come hither? though God knows we had not enquired into what we intended, as to our subsistence here; yet God sent us all hither joyfully together; and I hope God will send us home as joyfully again.

But let me shew you, in some particulars wherein God hath done more for you then for others, as you are prisoners.

First, You are *better fed* then others. Who do

do live upon the bounty of Gods extraordinary providence like you? may not God almighty speak to you, as the *Apostle* to them, *1 Cor.* 9. 7. *Who of you goeth a warfare at his own charges?* VVhen our Saviour sent forth his disciples without scrip or shooes, sayes he, *lacked ye any thing?* they answered, *nothing.* May not we say so? if he say to us, *lacked you any thing?* we must say no, he hath poured out his kindness upon us. O how sweetly did the holy prophet, think you, relish every bit of meat when God provided every bit so extraordinarily for him, *1 Kings. 17. 6.* *And the Raven brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening,* God doth not send it to us by a Raven; but by friends: but all he sends: bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening without our care. And is not God to be observed in this? you know there is a kind of a Famine abroad, but God will not have it a Famine here. VVho ever wants, God will be sure that his prisoners shall not want. As the King took care of *Jeremiah*, *Jer. 37. 21.* *Then Zedekiah the King commanded, that they should commit Jeremiah to the Court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the Bakers-Street: untill all the bread in the City was spent.* VVhen *Jeremiah* was in prison, God would be sure that he should not want as long as there was any bread to be had in the City. So God commands concerning his prisoners; though there be a kind of Famine abroad, God will not suffer his prisoners to want.

Secondly, *You are better taught* than others. VVho is like to you O people, about whose tents the *Mannah* raineth, not every morning onely, but morning and evening: week dayes, and Sabbath dayes, God doth open his door to you, and make every day as a Sabbath to you.

Thirdly, *You have more promises* than others. Now there are come in to us a whole shoal of of promises, that we would not not so properly claim before, 1 Pet. 2. 20. *If when you do well and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God,* 1 Pet. 4. 13. 14. *Rejoyce in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding Joy. If you be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you,* Jam. 1. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tryed he shall receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. If you suffer with him you shall also raaign with him,* 2 Tim. 2. 12. *Blessed are they that suffer for righteousness sake: for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name sake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven,* Math. 5. 10, 11, 12. Time would fail me to go over all those promises that are come in now upon us all at once. Oh we are an unthankfull people, if all these promises do not raise our faith and joy. Is it a light thing my brethren, that you should be heirs of the promises?

Fourth-

Fourthly, *God hath hath honored you more than others.* To others with you 'tis given to believe; but to you 'tis given to suffer for his sake; which the Apostle reckons up as a step higher than others attain to, *Philip. 1. 29.*

Fifthly, *God hath intrusted you with his honor more than others.* God hath put more into your hands, than into the hands of any other. Gods glory is trusted more with the sufferers of Christ than with any others. O be infinitely tender of Gods honor! O see that you love him more than others: praise him more than others.

A Thankf.

To think of the dark world beyond the
door of life. To think of the
dark world beyond the door of life.
To think of the dark world beyond the door of life.
To think of the dark world beyond the door of life.
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To think of the dark world beyond the door of life.

A. 10. 10.



A Sacramental speech grounded on

Pfalm. 40. 7. *Lo I come.*

IT is my purpose to speak to you of the coming of the Son, *Lo I come.* Now concerning this coming, I shall shew you. First, *Who* it is that is come. Secondly, *How* he is come. Thirdly, *Whence* he is come. Fourthly, *Why* he is come.

First, *Who it is that is come.* This is the first thing that I shall desire you to consider with reference to the coming of Christ,

(First,) *The bridegroom is come.* God sends his Ministers to you with that cry *Math. 25. 6. Behold the bridegroom cometh.* O with what joy doth the Bride receive her Bridegroom? so should believers receive Christ. Arise you Virgins then and come away. Awake you virgins this is the call of your Bridegroom

groom, *Cant. 2. 8. The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh, &c.* And what was this voice of her beloved, that doth so ravish her heart? see *verse 10. arise my love; my fair one, and come away, and so ver. 13.* Christ calls again and again; and you should come away.

(Secondly,) *Your King is come.* God sends his Ministers to you with that glad newes, that he put in the Prophets mouth, *Zach. 9. 9. rejoyce greatly O daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh.* Brethren, this is that which should cause you to rejoyce and shout for joy, that your King is come. And great reason have: for he is a great King and hath salvation with him, *Luke 19. 9. This day is salvation come to this house.*

(Thirdly,) *The deliver is come, Rom. 11. 26.* Brethren, I know good news must needs be welcome to you at such a time as this: why hear you then the blessed news that ever came to the ears of man, *Luke 2. 10. Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people for unto you is born---a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.* Ah Brethren! that the Savior is come, the deliverer is come this is the blessedst news that ever man heard. Hear what the Lord saith with reference to this, in that of the Prophet, *Isa. 62. 10. 11.* He calls upon his people to *cast up and prepare the way, &c. say ye to the daughter of Zion, behold thy salvation cometh, &c.* Ah brethren, this is good news for Zion, and this is the news God hath sent me with: behold the deliverer, the Saviour is come. O with what a welcome should

should such as this be received when he comes? how welcome was the news to the captives, that brought the news of their liberty? why, such should be the welcome, that you should give to the news the Gospel brings you of a deliverer. Now is your Jubilee, blessed are the people that hear the joyful sound *Psa. 89. 15.* He alludes to the sound of the Trumpets, in the time of the Jubilee: but it is to be understood of the joyful sound of the Gospel. It is blessed news that Christ the deliver is come.

Secondly, I am to shew you, *how he is come*, There is a two fold coming of Christ: his *gracious*, and his *glorious* coming. His *glorious* coming is not till hereafter, at the *last day*. This is the coming that he speaks of, *Rev. 1. 7.* He speaks of it as if it were present: because 'tis as certain as if it were present. *Every eye shall see him.* But then there is his *gracious* coming, and that is two fold *corporal*, or *spiritual*. His *corporal* coming, in his admirable *Incarnation*: his *spiritual* coming in the Gospel *Invitation*.

(First,) *His corporal coming in his admirable incarnation.* And this is blessed news to the world, at this his coming there were a quire of angels to celebrate his praise, *Luke 2. 13, 14.* And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God & saying, glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will towards men. We read that the great and glorious works of God, they are celebrated by the angels. And there are these four great works celebrated by them,

First,

First, *The work of Creation.* So that in *Job. 38. 7.* *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for Joy.* It is spoken with reference to the Creation; the angels did lift up their voices, and sang the praise of their Creator.

Secondly, *The work of conversion,* *Luke 15. 10.* *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* The work of conversion is a great and admirable work: and therefore celebrated by angels.

Thirdly, *At Christs incarnation;* so *Luke 2. 10, 11.*

Fourthly, *At the resurrection.* Then all the angels of God shall appear, then shall be a most glorious and general appearance of the angels to celebrate that work, heaven shall empty it self of all its glorious inhabitants.

(Secondly,) There is the *spiritual coming of Christ*: and this is in his *Ordinances.* This is his Chariot wherein he rides on conquering, *Psa. 45. 3, 4.* *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, and in thy Majesty ride prosperously.* This is to be understood of Christs going forth in the sound of the Gospel, which is his sword, whereby he rides on to conquer the world. Now in this respect Christ is come, exhibiting himself in the voice of the Gospel: there Christ doth shew himself, and impart himself to his people.

Thirdly. I am to shew you *whence* he is come. He is come from the throne of his glory. From the court of his Angels. From the bosom of his Father.

(First,)

(First,) *From the Throne of his glory.* O what a wonderful descent was this! that he should come from the Throne of his glory, to the manger among the beasts? from the company of the angels, to be crucified among the thieves! he came among the beasts; the world would not receive him, but he was thrust out among the beasts. Man by his Apostacy had brought himself among the beasts; and hither did Christ come to find him. But he was humbled more yet; from the throne to the cross. From the height of his glory, to the extremity of *shame*. O how should we think of the strange abasement of Christ, that he that was heir to the Crown of glory, should become man, and viler then any of the Sons of men, in some respect! this should have your great admiration.

(Secondly,) *From the Court of his angels.* The Lord Jesus Christ, he was the brightness of his Fathers glory, the express image of his person, that made his angels spirits and his Ministers a flaming fire. All the angels you must know were his Messengers. And what abasement was here, that he should come from the company of angels to be contemned by the basest of men!

(Thirdly,) *From the bosome of his Father.* The Lord Jesus Christ, he was the Son of Gods delight: his darling; the beloved object of his soul, *Math. 11. 27.* Christ is he that lyes in the bosome of the Father; and he alone is able to reveal the secrets of the Lord to the world, so *John 1. 18.* Now that the Lord Jesus Christ should

should come from the bosome of God, to the belly of hell, that he should leave the glory of heaven, for the torments of hell, and all for our sakes; what a strange wonder of Love was this! hence was it that Christ came for us. This is *the bread* that came down from heaven, that a man may eat of and not dye.

Fourthly, I shall shew you *why* he is come. And that is *To seek and to Save.*

(First,) *To seek.* That is one end of his coming, so *Luke 19. 10.* And who do you think that he is come to seek? It is us that were lost. *All we like sheep have gone astray,* now Christ is that great & good sheapherd that came to seek and to save that which was lost, in *Luke 15* you read of the lost *groat*, the lost *sheep*, and the lost *Son*: and who do you think this was; this was the lost sinner, *ver. 32.* who was it, think you, that sought us, and found us when we were lost? It was Jesus Christ: it was he that sought us. We had never found him, had not he sought us. *I am found of them that sought me not,* *Isaiah. 65. 1.* If Christ had stayed for us till we sought him, our salvation had never been wrought. The Lord Jesus Christ he sought us not, and laid hold on us. *He took not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham.* In effectual calling, there he takes hold of the sinner, he is fain to run after them and stop them, or else they would run into perdition.

(Secondly,) *He is come to save,* so the Apostle to Timothy, *1 Tim. 15.* This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I

am chief. He puts in for one. Oh brethren, this is that should make the coming of Christ welcome to you, he came to seek and save you. O therefore welcome him at his coming.

Use. Is it so, that Christ is come? then go you forth to meet him. *Math. 25. 6.* That was the cry there, this is that which God sends his Messengers to call upon you for, that you may go forth to meet him.

But how should you go forth to meet him? First, as a *Bride* doth her bridegroom. Secondly, as redeemed *Captives* do their deliverer. Thirdly; as dutiful *subjects* do their King.

First, *As a Bride doth her Bridegroom.* This I shall open to you in three particulars. First, Put off the rayment of your captivity. Secondly, put on the wedding Garment. Thirdly, trim up all your Lamps.

First, *Put off the rayment of your Captivity.* If the poor Captive woman were to shave her head, and pair her nails, and put off the rayment of her captivity, &c. (*Deut. 21. 13.*) before she was to be married to any one of the Tribes of Israel: how much more should you put off the old man and your sinful deeds, that are to be married to Christ? If so be the Children of Israel were to wash and sanctifie themselves, and wash their cloaths, when the Lord was to come down upon Mount Sinai, *Exod. 19.* how much more should you, when the Lord Jesus comes down to you? you know that

Children may not come at their fathers Table with unwashed hands : neither must you to eat of the dainties spread in the Gospel.

(Secondly,) *You must put on the wedding garment.* You will say, what is this? it is a *conjugal love* to Jesus Christ. And this is compared to a garment : for we are bid to *put on charity*, or love. And its set forth as the best part of the Christian rayment : and *above all things put on Charity* ; for what more fits a marriage than a conjugal affection? you should bring forth your most strong and ardent affections and love to him, you should meet him with songs, and what songs? such as the Psalmist doth *Pf. 45. title. A song of Loves*, let your eyes be fixed upon Christ in the Gospel, till your eyes affect your heart : and while your heart is musing, the fire will be kindling ; where will you bestow your love, but where the bridgroom is so lovely?

(Thirdly,) *You should trim up all your Lamps.* you should snuff all your lights, and trim up all your lamps, to go forth to meet him, And receive him and feed upon him when he is offered: he is held out to you on purpose, in the Gospel, for you to take and receive him. *Gal. 3. 1. Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been ardently set forth crucified among you.* But you will say was Christ crucified in *Galatia*? he was in the preaching of the word : he was crucified among them.

Secondly, You must meet him as *redeemed captives* do their deliverer, would you know how
this

this is? it is with *palms of victory* in your hands with *garments of salvation*; with *songs of deliverance*. These are the three things wherein this stands. you have all together, in *Rev. 7, 9, 10.* *They were in white robes*, the garments of Salvation: and *palms of victory*, and they had the *songs of salvation* too, *ver. 10.* Oh Brethren, if you have any sence of your spiritual bondage and captivity, to be the servants of sin, under the fear of death, under the King of terrors; then be glad in your redeemer meet him with songs of praise. O how should the high praises of God be heard in your mouths? you should meet him as the virgins did *David* at his return from his victory, *1 Sam. 18. 6.* with *singing and dancing*-----with joy, &c. Thus should you meet your deliverer, you should *compass him with songs of praise*. O my Brethren, you that are the redeemed of the Lord, look down into the horrible pit, and then look up and sing songs to the Lord. O it is a glorious salvation that Christ hath wrought for us. How welcome was he to good old *Samuel*? how sweetly doth he hug Christ in his arms? (and much more, you must think in his heart) *now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* This we have seen, we have seen Christ coming to us in the Gospel. We have seen him like *Sampson*, pulling down the house about our enemies, and carrying away the posts, and setting them up as Trophies of his victory. It was he that was condemned, that you might be freed. O let your lips praise him, and the souls which he hath redeemed, let me call upon with

the Psalmist, *Psalm 98*. A psalm on purpose to Jews and Gentiles to sing to the Lord for their deliverance; *verse 3*. *He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.* And what use doth the Psalmist make of this? *vers. 4. make a joyful noise unto the Lord all the earth, &c.* He goes on calling upon all the Creatures to praise God for this. If the *Sea must roar*, and the *floods clap their hands*, how much more should you do it, that are the redeemed of the Lord.

Thirdly, Meet him as dutiful subjects do their King. This is the news sent to Zion, *behold thy King cometh.* Then meet him as a King, receive him with acclamation and praise, as they did when *Solomon* was proclaimed King, *1 Kings 1. 39, 40. They blew the Trumpet, and all the people said God save the King. And the people piped with pipes and returned with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.* O if they met King *Solomon* with such joy, how should you meet *Christ*? It is another manner of King that comes to you than *Solomon* was, you should say to *Christ* as they did to *Gideon*, *Judg 8. 22. Rule thou over us: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.* Thus should you say to *Christ*, rule thou over us: for he hath delivered you, not from the hand of *Midian*, but from *Satan*. But how should we meet our King? *prepare the way, bow the knee.*

(First,) *Prepare the way, Math. 3. 3.* *Christ* had his fore-runner going before him, that was *John*, saying, *prepare you the way of the Lord,*
make

make his paths straight. How must the way of the Lord be prepared? *every Mountain must be brought low* &c. every Mountain of pride and opposition that are in our hearts must be laid low. O if there be such preparing for the King, where he is to lodge and go, how much more should you for the King of glory where he is to lodge!

(Secondly,) *Bow the knee,* we read of *Joseph*, (and you know he was a type of Christ,) that when *Pharaoh* had exalted him from the prison to such dignity, he prepares some to go before him, and cry, *bow the knee.* So God hath set up Christ and exalted him, and given him a *name above every name*; now let me call upon you (and my self with you) that you bow the knee to him. I speak not of the bodily knee: it is more than your cap and knee that he requireth. He will have you to bow before him. O then see that you bow before him, see that you do him homage. Now your King is set up in another manner than he was upon the *Grosse*, *behold your King.* That is the duty that I would perswade you to now: behold your King and look that you bow to him. Let your souls and all that is within you bow to him. Let your understandings bow to him, by a right apprehension of him, by a right conceiving of him, as worthy to be loved and feared. Let your wills bow, by an utter rejection of your sins: and a most ardent desire to receive Christ. Let all your affections come in

and bow, and not dare to stir more than his commands give you leave. In a word let all that is within you bow before him, and give place to Jesus Christ. Now down with the world, out with your lusts, and make ready for Christ. Let all your worldly business bow before him, and give place to Jesus Christ, away with this foolish deceitful world; let all be at the feet of Christ: and let all your souls be in subjection to him. This will be an acceptable meeting with him, if you so meet him.

A Sa-



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SACRAMENTAL

Speech grounded on,

Isaiah. 9. 6.

And his name shall be called wonderful.

Quest.

W

Hy is it that Christ hath given to him this name of wonderful.

Ans^r. There are so many wonders that meet together in Christ, that tis no wonder at all, that he should have this name, *wonderful*. Christ was every way *wonderful*. He was wonderful in his *Person*; wonderful in his *Passion*. Wonderful in his *Conception*, being conceived by the power of the holy Ghost: wonderful in his *Birth*, being born of a pure virgin: wonderful in his *Life*; wonderful in his *death*, and the effects of it: wonderful in his *Resurrection*, that a dead per-

son should be raised and that by his own power; wonderful in his *Ascension*. In a word he was every way wonderful: wonderful in his *Humiliation* and *Exaltation*.

Ah Christians if you would see a wonder, look upon Christ, and here see a wonder, here is a wonder, above all that the world can shew. There are two sorts of wonders that God hath to shew, the wonder of his power; and the wonder of his grace.

First, The wonder of his Power. What a wonder is it, to see such a sabrick as heaven and earth, all come out of nothing by the power of God. Christians 'tis a great evil in us that we do no more wonder at this great power. What a wonder is the Sun, in its bigness and brightness, flying many Millions of miles in a minute of an hour!

Secondly, But all these wonders are nothing to what his wonder of grace is. In Christ you may see all these wonders swallowed up. Let me shew you a little of this wonder. In Christ are to be seen these following wonders. 1. God manifest in the flesh. 2. God suffering in the flesh. 3. Justice and mercy sweetly reconciled. 4. The greatest good coming out of the womb of the greatest evil. 5. Perfect justice raging against perfect innocence. 6 Infinite wisdom at cost upon meer worthlessness. 7. The Son of the blessing made to be a curse. 8. The Father of mercy forgetting his bowels to his own Son.

First, God manifest in the flesh, John 1. 14. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among

us, and we beheld his glory, &c. O brethren, this is a wonder indeed. The *Apostle* tells you, that *without controversy this is a great Mystery*, that *God should be manifest in the flesh*. Here we may cry out deservedly, with wonder and astonishment, *God is come down to us in the likeness of man. God manifest in the flesh!* why, what is flesh? *all flesh is grass*, that is, fading, withering, dying. *What! the word made flesh!* shall the immortal put on mortality? and incorruption, put on corruption? O what a wonder is this! O behold and wonder; see if Christ do not deserve the name of *wonderful*. Holy *Abraham*, was ashamed of his meaness in this respect, when he came before God, because he was but *dust and ashes*. *Behold, I have taken upon me to speak to the great God, who am but dust and ashes*. O then how is it to see God clothed with the flesh of man? This was the wonder of angels. O how did they wonder to see their maker clothed with flesh! O come to the cross of Christ, to the cratch of Christ, and there bow and worship. Let not the Humble abasement of Christ, hinder you from adoring him in his greatness. The wisemen found Christ in poverty & meaness; yet they knew what glory was veiled under this meannesse; and fell down and offered *gold, frankincense, myrrhe, &c.* go ye and doe likewise.

Secondly, *God suffering in the flesh*, well may he have his name *wonderful* upon this account. 'tis said that the *Philosopher*, observing the *unnatural eclipse of the Sun* at the suffering
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of Christ, cried out, *either the God of nature is suffering, or the world is at an end.* When Christ was suffering, it was God that suffered, though he did not suffer in the Godhead, but in the Manhood. Beloved, if you should have seen the judgement, that befel, *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*, would you not have been astonished at such a sight as this was? much more if hell should have opened, and you have seen the torments of the damned, would you not have been astonished, and wonder at this? but in this that God should suffer, is more than if all the men in the world should have suffered to all eternity. O how did the angels stand by the Crosse, wondering, to see him whom they adored and worshipped, to be mocked and Crucified.

Thirdly, *Justice and mercy sweetly reconciled.* The Justice and mercy of God, seemed to be, as it were, at a controversie about fallen man.

Darius, you know, had made a decree, that *he that did offer any petition to any God or man, except to himself, within such a time, should be cast into the den of Lions.* *Daniel* comes within the danger of this decree: and what must be done now? either *Daniel* must be spared; and then, what would become of the Laws of the *Medes and Persians*? or, else *Daniel* must be devoured; and then the King would have been cruel to himself. Yet providence did so order it, that the Law was executed and *Daniel* spared.

So here, man had sinned; and God said that he

he should dye, and now either man must dye, or God must be false of his word. Now what shall be done? The *wisdom* of God steps in, and finds out a person that should dye, and so Gods *truth* be saved, and his *mercy* magnified. But where shall this person be found? the *Angels* could not do it: nor *man* could not do it. But God would take the humane nature upon him, and that should suffer, that God and man might be reconciled. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

Mercy and truth are met together, how can this be? it seems they were at a great distance, & could not be brought together. Truth said, that man should dye: & mercy said that man should be saved. Truth said, if he dye not, I am a liar; and where then is the honor of my truth? but mercy pleaded, if he dye, where is the honor of my Grace and mercy? Why now, wisdom puts in a surety, and that goes for the principal.

Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. How can this be? Gods justice and righteousness did require that man should give satisfaction; but this is all reconciled in Christ, he reconciled God and man together.

Fourthly, *The greatest good coming out of the womb of the greatest evil.* Sin, is the mother of all evil. You will say, can any good come out of such a womb as this? It is true, it cannot *naturally* come; but God did so order it, that it should be the occasion of it. Were it not a wonder, to see grapes come of thorns? and Olives of thistles? such a wonder you may see

see in Christ. You may see, out of the sin of man, comes great glory to God, and good to man.

First, *Great glory to God*: for had not man sinned, neither Gods justice nor mercy had been so magnified. His justice had not been seen at all, in a manner, in punishing the offenders; but 'tis eminently seen in punishing of Christ, who dyed for sinners. This is a louder demonstration of the Justice of God, than if God had turned all heaven and earth into confusion upon the sin of man.

Again, hereby is way made for magnifying Gods mercy. The sin of man, as God hath ordered it, hath given way to God in the demonstration of his mercy in forgiving, and his justice in punishing. It could not have bin thought, that God had been of so gracious a nature, able to put up such great affronts as man had given him, had not sin given him occasion to magnifie his mercy.

Secondly, Again, as the sin of man hath given occasion to the advancing of Gods glory, so for the promoting of mans good. By this man is raised to a higher state of happiness and felicity than ever he should have been. Now there is a nearer conjunction between God and man, than ever was before the fall, or ever should have been had it not been for the sin and fall of man. Before it was said, that man was made a little lower than the angels: but now it may be truly said, that he is so much higher than the Angels: more nearly joyned to God. Had man continued in innocence, he had had onely a lengthening out of his temporal life in paradise:

paradise but now by his sin Christ hath opened the door of heaven to him. O then wonder at the power of Christ!

Fifthly, *Perfect justice, raging against perfect innocence.* You know that God is perfect in his Righteousness and justice. *A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.* And yet notwithstanding, his perfect Justice was set against his own son, in whom there was nothing but perfect innocence. He was the *Lamb of God*: a lamb without spot and blemish; *full of grace and truth.* *No guile was found in his mouth*; and yet you know how the wrath of God brake out upon him. It brake out upon him to the very uttermost: that if he would but put himself into the room of man, he must dye for it, tho Justice it self said I find no fault in him, yet he must dy: all could not save him: but if he will stand between God & offending man, and take our sins upon himself, though he had none of his own, yet justice takes hold of him. Let me say as the *Apostle behold the goodness & severity of God.* *Goodness to thee, but severity unto Christ.* O what had come upon you, if you had been to bear the blow! you see how Justice runs upon the Son of God, and falls upon him, and tears him to the ground, and lets out his *blood*, and would not spare him, though he were the only beloved Son of God. O consider, *how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God!*

You read, how when *Daniels* enemies were cast into the *Lions den*, that they brake all their bones before they came to the bottome of the den. O how wouldst thou have been torn, had the

the Justice of God taken hold of thee!

Sixthly, *Infinite wisdom at cost upon man's worthlesse.* God expects the blood of his own Son, which was of infinite value, to redeem worthless man. Would you not wonder to see a wise man to be changing *Pearls* for *pebbles*? yet here it is a greater wonder: the wise God, redeeming by the death of his own Son, sinful man out of the hands of his own justice. Why what is man? are not *all the nations of the world as nothing before him*? and yet upon this nothing, this vanity, is Gods infinite wisdom at this cost, that he might save us from eternal death.

Seventhly, *The Son of the Blessing made to be a curse, Gal. 3. 13.* Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. Observe it, 'tis not said he was *ACCURSED* for us, but a *CURSE* for us. Christ hath delivered us from the curse: but how? by taking the curse upon himself. You know the curses of the Law that were denounced against sinners: all these curses met together upon one Jesus Christ. How is the book of Gods word full from one end to the other with Curses against sinners! what a load then was there upon the back of Christ, when all these curses met together upon him? what a wonder is it that God should be cursing of his own Son! to hear God say, *all my curses shall meet upon thee: cursed shalt thou be in thy body; and cursed shalt thou be in thy soul.* To hear the great God speaking thus to his own Son, *go thou Cursed,* I will engage my Justice
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and wrath against thee, to torment thee and put thee to death. O what a sight was this! yet thus it was with Jesus Christ. He had as many *torments as members*: and all the torments that he endured had the curse of God in them.

Eighthly, *The Father of mercy forgetting his Bowels to his own Son.* VVe read of a very strange thing that was done by the *King of Moab*, 2 Kings 3.27. *When he saw that the Battel was too sore for him, &c. he took his own Son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering, what a strange sight was this?* yet there is a greater wonder than this to be seen in Christ: to see God sacrificing his own Son, and offering him up for a burnt-offering, to appease his wrath against sinful man: O shall not your hearts stand a wondering at this! to see, he that was a God of mercy to have no mercy for his own son? he that had bowels of pity for you, to have no pity for his Son; O behold and wonder. By this time I hope you are convinced that Christ is *wonderful*.

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SACRAMENTAL

Speech grounded on

Eph. 3. 19.

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.

Quest. **W** Herein doth the Love of Christ appear to be a surpassing love? This appears in his putting himself into our Nature. His putting himself into our room. Putting our lives into his purchase, putting his name into our bond. Putting our names into his will. Putting his spirit into our hearts. Putting his glory into our hands.

First, It appears in putting himself into our nature. What admirable love and condescension was this? as we were Creatures there was an infinite distance between us and Christ: much more as we are sinners, but this infinite

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condescension was nothing to the love of Christ. He stept from the Court of his angels, to the reproaches of men at one step. O what a step was this! for Christ to take our nature upon him, is more than for an Emperour to become a beggar. Yea there is no comparison that can expresse it. This was love indeed; surpassing love, that the Lord Jesus Christ should have such a love to man: that he should become of kin to sinners; flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; here is matchless unparallel'd love.

Secondly, It appears in *putting himself in our room*. Christ did not onely become man with us, he doth not onely take the rags of our *Nature* upon him, but our *condition* upon him, the pain, shame, curse that was due to us upon him. He was content to be in our stead: to suffer, dy for us: herein is love, *Christ* knew, before hand, what it would cost him if he would become surety for us: he knew the death we had deserved, the wrath that was our portion; and yet he was content to put himself into our room, that we might be exempted and excused, *Christ* hath put in himself for us, not to be bound for us for a time; but did engage himself, resolving to pay for us that we might be excused. It was much that *Christ* did become man for us: but now that he should not onely take our nature upon him, but *our curse* upon him too, and become sin for us, and a curse for us, this makes it more wonderful. It is strange that *Christ* should take our nature upon him; but if you consider the *end* why he did

did it, this would be more wonderful: it was that he might be miserable; and become capable to be accursed for us! that he might be cursed and killed by the wrath of God! He had not become man, had it not been for this end. Now that he should become man for this end, how great was this? and yet this was his end. When Justice must have *blood*, that he would take his *blood* and give it for us: and that he might, he would take himself a humane body and soul.

Thirdly, It appears in putting our lives into his purchase. This is another strange expression of the love of *Christ*. O if *Christ* had dyed for others and not for us: if he had put in others names and not ours, then we might have passed our days with sorrow: and gone into the Mountains, and pined away in sadness. But now that he should leave out any others names and put in ours, O here is distinguishing love! did you ever hear of a man that took in a beggar from the door to be his heir? but suppose such a thing might be done: did you ever hear of a man that took in his enemy to be his heir, and made over all that he hath to him? thus hath *Christ* done for us. Ah Brethren, how may we stand astonished at this love, and say, as he, *John* 14. *Lord whence is it that thou dost manifest thy self to us and not to the world?* That thou hast put in our names and not others? surely here is great grace. O the free grace of God to us! though *Christ* hath dyed, yet you know the greatest part of the world shall be never the better for his death.

Though he hath dyed for man, yet the most of men, through the obstinacy and hardnesse of their hearts do resist him: but he hath overcome the obstinacy of our hearts and hath made us partakers of his death.

Fourthly, It appears *in putting his name into our bonds*. Herein is the love of *Christ* manifested, in that he should become surety and bound for us. You know that the surety is to set his name to the bond. Now a man will be very wary for whom he is bound; the man is not a man that is insufficient. Did you ever hear of a man that bound himself for one, that he knew that he should pay it himself? thus hath *Christ* done for us: he knew that all our debts would come upon him; and yet notwithstanding he did engage himself for us. Beloved, the debt of sin is a very *formidable debt*: it is such a debt as if so be, the debt of the least sin had been laid upon all the Saints and Angels in glory to give satisfaction for it, they had bin drowned in everlasting perdition. But now *Christ* undertook to pay for all out of his own stock, though he knew what it would cost him, if he did become bound for us, O what love is this!

Fifthly, It appears *in putting our names into his will*. Brethren, herein is the love of *Christ* seen towards his people, in that he hath distinguished between them and others. When he made his last Will and Testament, he put in believers names and left out the rest, *Rev. 21. 27. There shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, &c. But they which are written in the lambs*

lamb's book of Life. This is a priviledge indeed to have your names written in his book, upon his will. Our Saviour bid his disciples *rejoyce in this that their names were written in heaven,* in Christs book, and upon his will: this is matter of joy. But how shall we know whether our names are written in heaven? who shall ascend up into heaven to fetch it down from thence? I answer; we have the copy of his will here upon earth: *This word is the copy of his will* that is in heaven. If our names be in *this book,* our names are in *his heart.* Now let us go to the Law and Testimony, what saith that? that saith, if thou *believe thou shalt be saved.* If thou *repent and be converted,* thy sins shall be *blotted out* *Act. 3. 19*

Sixthly, *It appears in putting his spirit into our hearts,* *Ezek. 36. 27.* *And I will put my spirit within you.* Brethren, herein is the infinite goodness and love of Christ seen, that he should bestow so great a gift upon so unworthy a receiver. O what love is this, that those hearts that have been the stables of unclean lusts, that Christ should take up his abode there! here is strange love indeed. Is it true indeed, *will God dwell on earth,* 1 Kings 8:27. And if it were matter of wonder to Solomon, that God should shew some Token of his presence in so excellent a fabrick as that was; what matter of wonder is it that he should come, and make shew of his presence in our hearts!

Seventhly, *In putting his glory into our hands.* This is the greatest trust that can possibly be committed into our hands, this is more worth

than all the world : for all the world was made for this end, to promote Gods glory. Yea, it is better than the *blood of Christ* : for the end is better than the means. Now the blood of Christ was shed to this end, for the glory of God. Now then what a great trust is this, that is intrusted with you in your hands ? surely he loves you well, that trusts his glory with you. Your unworthy walking will more dishonor Christ, than any thing in the world beside. None can honour *Christ* as you ; and none can dishonor him as you : let me put in that by the way. They that have such a Jewel put into their hands, had need be careful. I hope by this time you are fully convinced that the love of *Christ* is a surpassing love.

Use, There are two things that I shall hence presse you to. 1. *To Remember.* 2. *Answer and imitate this love of Christ.*

First, *To Remember this Love.* O Christians, be sure that you never forget such love as this, *Cant. 1. 4. We will remember thy love more than Wine : this is the duty that I am pressing you to, thus to remember Christs love.* Brethren, methinks it should be impossible for you to forget such love as this. Methinks it should be needlesse to bid you remember this love. Let my right hand forget her cunning rather than I should forget the love of Christ. Let my tongue forget to speak, rather than not to speak of this love. We should sooner forget to eat than forget *Christ*. And yet how apt are we notwithstanding, though we have so much reason to remember him, to have the

the memory of Christ and his love out of our minds! the memory of Christ should be written upon us in Marble and Brasse, never to be blotted out. Consider *this love is a mindful, and a memorable love.*

First, *A mindful love.* Never had persons so mindful a friend as we have in Christ: our names are ever before him, they are engraven upon the palms of his hands. He can as soon forget himself as forget us: he can as soon forget his heart as forget us. *Exod. 18. 29. And Aaron shall bear the names of the Children in the breast-plate of Judgement, upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually.* Here you may see what a mindful friend Christ is, for these things were typical of Christ. Observe, (1.) The place where the names were to be written; upon the breast-plate of Judgement: upon his heart. (2.) The way why they were written there: For a memorial before the Lord. He hath your names there that he might never forget you. (3.) Observe the perpetuity of this; for a memorial before the Lord continually. And observe, these were to be carried by the high priest before God when he went into the high place. Christ hath not forgotten our names, now he is gone into the high place. You know how it was with the Butler when he was gone into Pharaohs presence, he forgot Joseph and all his afflictions. But Christ, he remembers Joseph and his afflictions all the while, though he be in heaven.

(Secondly,) It is a memorable Love. As

Moses spake of the night of Israels deliverance; it is a night much to be remembered: so say I of this love of Christ; it is a love never to be forgotten. If Christ do bear your names upon his heart, methinks that you should ever bear his name upon you hearts. The love of Christ is worthy to be for a perpetual memorial upon our hearts. And therefore I may say to you of Christ, as they of him, he is worthy for whom thou shouldest do this.

Quest. But what kind of remembrance should we have of this love?

Answ. It must be a feeling, and a lasting remembrance.

First, A feeling remembrance, it should not be a bare Historical remembrance of Christ; but all your affections should be drawn out after Christ. He did not onely remember you, his remembrance of you was an affectionate remembrance; he hath made it to appear with a witnesse. Such should our remembrance of Christ be.

(Secondly,) A lasting remembrance, it should not be at the quickning of a Sermon or the like, but an abiding remembrance of him. Brethren, our remembrance of Christ should be a living remembrance. It should be with us as with a loving husband that hath lost his wife; it seems that where ever he is, she should be with him: thus it should be with us, we should have Christ ever with us. VVhat Solomon speaks of the Law of Christ we should say of the remembrance of Christ. When we go it should lead us, when we awake it should talk with us,

Prov.

Prov. 26. 22. So Cant. 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lye all night betwixt my breasts.* That is, say the Dutch Divines, the love of my beloved, especially of his death and sufferings, shall continually be upon my heart; and I will keep it close with me, to be my *Nose-gay*: and the like. He shall lye between my breasts; that is, I will keep the remembrance of his love upon my heart to comfort me.

Secondly, As you should remember, so you should be careful to *imitate and answer his love*. Beloved, as the *Apostle* says of Gods love to you; *what manner of love is this, &c.* So it should be said of your love to *Christ*, what manner of love is this that you bear to *Christ*? It should be such a love, as that people may be forced to say, what manner of love is this that they bear to *Christ*? Labor to have such a love to *Christ*, so great a love, as that all other things may be nothing to you in comparison of the love of *Christ*. And when you have loved *Christ* as much as you can, weep that you can love him no more.

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SACRAMENTAL

Speech, grounded on

Eph. V. 2.

But walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice unto God.

MY beloved, this subject, of the love of Christ to sinners, is indeed an inconceivable Subject. I have been backward to meddle with it, for how shall I speak of that which I do not know? For the love of Christ passeth all knowledge. Yet I shall a little open it to you, and shall make it appear that the love of Christ is great to his people: though I cannot comprehend it in the length and breadth, and height and depth of it, yet this we may know, that he hath a very tender love to us, *Rev. 1. 5. To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.* Christ hath loved us: and would you have

have a proof of his love to us? he hath loved us *and washed us*. He found us in our sins as swine in the mire; and yet he loved us and washed us, when he was fain to stop his breath as it were and hold his nostrils, yet he would come and wash us: yea he would make a bath of his *own blood*. *Christ* commended *Mary*, that she washed his feet with her tears: but how is the love of *Christ* commended in that he hath washed us in his blood? *Christ* hath our names down upon his book, *Rev.* 21. 27. *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, &c.* But they that are written in the book of life. *Mark*, *Christ* keeps his book for you, lest you should be forgotten, or there should be any mistake. It is a metaphor taken from men that keep their books, because they will not let any thing be mistaken or forgotten. Yea, but books may be mislaid: therefore *Christ* hath your names written on his breast. The High priest was to have the names of the twelve Tribes upon his breast. So doth *Christ*, he hath you, for remembrance sake, engraven upon his hands, *Isaiah* 49. 15. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, &c. She may forget: but I have engraven thee upon my hands: yea he hath you upon his heart.* He challengeth all the world for his love to you. He tels you that a woman may forget her child, but he will not forget you. A woman cannot chuse, but have a very tender respect for her child: for this child (saith she) have I born many a bitter throw and pain: now, for you did *Christ* travail, *Isaiah* 53. 11. And so the *Apostle Peter*,
speak

speaking of the Resurrection of *Christ* (*Acts* 2.) he tells us, that he being freed from the pains of death, it being impossible he should be holden of them. The word in the *Greek* signifies birth-pains. Believers, they did as it were, come forth of the womb of his love. There is the very picture of a believer upon the heart of *Christ*. So that he cannot look upon his hands or his heart but he must be put in mind of us: so dear was his love to us. What characters of love be ther that cannot be found in *Christ*? Love covereth a multitude of faults. And O how may this be seen in *Christ*? we have many sins; and yet *Christ* passeth by them all. Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee, *Cant.* 4. 7. Again Love is strong as death. And so it was in *Christ*, his love was stronger than death: he under went death it self for us. He was not afraid to passe under the pangs of death that he might redeem us. Again, love fills the heart with love to the person beloved what a dear respect hath *Christ* for his spouse! every thing of theirs is sweet to him. Come my Love that art in the clefts of the Rock, in the secrets places of the stairs, let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy voyce, for sweet is thy voyce, and thy countenance is comely, *Cant.* 2. 14. The Church says she is black, but *Christ* says she is comely. But more particularly, I shall shew you some evidences of the greatness of *Christ*'s love. His letters, are letters of Love. His lips, they are lips of Love. His Tokens, are the tokens of Love. His Testament, is the evidence of Love. His Blood is a stream of Love.

1. His letters are the letters of Love, the Gospel,

Gospel, is the book sent down from heaven, wherein every *chapter* is a letter of love. Thou art ready to faint sometimes; Christian, and unbeliever is ready to prevail: here thou mayst read the promises under *Christ's* own hand, sent down from heaven to thee. Here thou mayst read how love did care for thee, when thou wast in thy blood; he said *Live*. Here thou mayst read what expressions of love there was between *Christ* and thee, when he was wooing of thee: here are the letters of *his* love. Here thou mayst read those loving, melting passages of *his*, whereby he wooed thee and prevailed with thee. Here he shews, though he be absent for a while, yet he will come again. Here he hath set the time and the day when thou shalt be married to him: even when the body of *Christ* is compleat. O how canst thou hear these letters of love, and not be in love with *Christ* again?

Secondly, *His lips are lips of love; the kisses of his mouth are sweeter than wine; the words of his mouth are better than life. His lips drop as the Honey-comb. Never man spake like this man: all that heard him bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.* Well did *Mary* chuse to sit at the feet of *Christ*, rather than at the feast: she found more sweet in the Honey-comb of *Christ's* lips, than at the feast. Let us but look over the last sermon of *Christ*, and the last prayer of *Christ*, and how may this set us a loving of *Christ*.

Look over his last sermon, *John* 14. 15 and
16. chap-

16. chapters, how lovingly doth he dispute down the unbelieving fears of our hearts? *Let not your heart be troubled.* And he propounds loving arguments: though he be gone, he will send us *the comforter*: and he will not be long from *us* neither, and then we shall be in no worse a case or place than he himself. And in the mean time, *his* going from *us* is out of love to *us*: not because he wanted love for *us*, but because he *went to prepare a place for us*.

Look into his last prayer, and how lovingly doth he carry *us* in *his* arms to *his* Father, when he was going out of the world, begging *his* Father that he would sanctifie *us*, and keep *us* from the evil of the world, and that he would at length bring *us* to enjoy *his* glory.

Thirdly, *His tokens are tokens of love.* As a woman will be often looking over her tokens, because in these she sees the heart of her beloved; so if you would be in love with *Christ* be often looking over the love-tokens of *Christ*. Thou canst not turn thy eye but thou must see his tokens. But there are three or four tokens especially that you should be looking into.

(First,) He hath sent thee a *pardon for thy sins*. O what a blessed token is this? *Psa. 32. 1, 2. Blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven, &c.* He is blessed and blessed again: over and over blessed; he is a thrice happy man that hath got *his* pardon, why, *this* is the token that *Christ* hath sent thee that art a believer. O look after thy pardon, and thou shalt find that thy pardon

don *is* written in the blood of *Christ*: for it was *his blood* that made satisfaction. He loved thee, and therefore washed thee from thy sins in *his blood*. O with what joy and sweetness shouldest thou look over thy pardon, Christian! it *is* that which must carry thee through all thy difficulties. Doth the Devil assault thee? do but shew thy pardon and this will worit him. Doth the Lord frown upon thee? shew him thy pardon, this will silence him. Doth thy Conscience accuse thee? shew it thy pardon, and that will quiet it.

(Secondly,) He hath sent thee a *Patent for heaven*, this hath Christ given you that are believers: he hath made over to you in *his Gospel* a firm conveyance of heaven. So that I may say a believer hath *as true* a right to heaven *as Christ* can make him; yea *as Christ* hath himself. *You are they that have endured in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a Kingdom as my Father hath appointed me, &c.* Now believers, can you tell the worth of *this* token? can you cast up the worth of endlesse glory? can you tell what God and heaven *is* worth? then you may tell me what this token *is* worth; never was there such a token sent *as this is*?

(Thirdly,) He hath sent thee the golden chain of the *Jewels and bracelets of thy graces*. As when the servant of *Abraham*, went to take *Rebeckah* for wife to *Isaac* he gave her bracelets, &c. So hath *Christ* to you: he hath given you the chain of all the graces. These are the Jewels he hath adorned you with. Dost thou find any faith, love, &c. in thee? though
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it be like a grain of Mustard-seed, and like a spark on the hearth? O blesse the Lord Christ upon the bended knees of thy soul, that he hath given thee this. He hath done more for thee in this, than he hath done for all the world beside. O how thankful should you be, that have received such a token from him? Christian, when ever thou dost feel the operation of the spirit of Christ within thee, let this mind thee of the love of him that hath sent thee all this.

(Fourthly,) He hath sent thee the *seal and testimony of his spirit*. Hast thou received the spirit of adoption teaching thee to cry *Abba Father*? It was he that sent it. Hast thou so sure a guide, as the sweet compassionate spirit? so loving a Counsellor as the spirit of Christ in thee? O take notice of the love of Christs in sending him to thee.

Fourthly, *His testament is the evidence of love*, beloved, it is impossible for me to utter, or you to conceive the riches of Christs love expressed to you in *his testament, his Covenant*: herein, Christian, thou mightest read the strange love of Christ to thee, in that he hath given thee his testament, and delivered it to thee *as* his act and deed, sealed with his own blood. O how much did *David* make of *this*? It was the last words of that sweet singer of *Israel*. *Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure and this is all my salvation and all my desire*, 2 Sam. 23. He had all that heart could wish for in this Covenant.

O Christian, hath Christ given thee his covenant? O make much of this covenant, 'tis a sweet token indeed. O the great privileges and sweet immunities that are conveyed to believers here! freedom from sin; from the guilt and power of sin. Freedom from misery; from the wrath of God, the curse of the law, from the sting of death, from the evil of the world, from the danger of hell. And beside all this, what legacies hath he given thee in the covenant? God for thy Father, himself for thy Saviour, his spirit for thy comforter and sanctifier, his Ministers for thy teachers, his ordinances for thy furtherance in grace: there he hath given thee thy adoption and assurance for heaven. Do but look over this, and say if thou canst, that *Christ* hath not loved thee.

Fifthly, *His Blood is a stream of love*, dost thou doubt of the love of Christ? do but look upon him on his crosse, how his feet and hands and heart are pierced: thou mayst see the love of Christ flowing out of every part.

Use, Now since Christ hath so loved you, you that are his people do you love *him again*. O where should you bestow your love, place your affections, fix your hearts but here? I shall give you two motives. He *desires* your love: and he *deserves* your love.

First, *Consider he desires your love*. You have seen a little how Christ doth love you; and what doth he expect, but that you should love him again? and can there be any thing less that he could require! O methinks thou shouldst

shouldest give up thy heart to *Christ*. This is all that he expects for this love, that you should love him again. This *Christ* will accept, and nothing short of this will he accept. Love cannot be satisfied, but by love again. It must be paid in its own coyn, *Cant. 8. 7. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned.* As no Treasure in the world can buy love, purchase love; so no sufficiency in the world will be sufficient for love, unlesse you give love your love again, *1 Cor. 13. 3.* Now Christian, be perswaded then to give away thy heart out of hand to *Christ*. O bestow thy love upon him, where-hast thou such a thing in thee, but that thou shouldst love *Christ*? doth any man plant a vineyard, and not expect to eat of the fruit of it? hath he put love into thee, and doth not he expect that thou shouldest love him?

Secondly, *He deserves your love.* I may say of him as they of the *Centurion*: he is worthy thou shouldst do this thing for him; for he loveth our nation. *Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive honor and strength, &c.* He is worthy to receive all, that you can give unto him. If there were any thing else that were worthy of your love, there might be some excuse that you did not bestow it upon *Christ*. But alas there is nothing here that doth deserve your love. As *Paul* said, *was Paul Crucified for you, &c.* so may I say were these things crucified for you? but *Christ* was crucified for you: he hath deserved your love. This is he that came in to the world to seek and

to save. That came and found you naked and dead and wounded : and then let out his blood and cured you. This is he that when he came, you spit upon him, and refused him ; yet he would not be put off from you so, but he would do you good. How often hath he come and refreshed you with the refreshings of his love ? how often hath he taken you into his galleries and filled you with his secrets ? you that are beleivers may remember the places where he hath given you visits, and made you tast of the powers of the world to come.

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SACRAMENTAL
Speech, grounded on

Math. 15. 28.

O woman, great is thy faith.

WE have read many noted and remarkable stories of sundry great exploits, that have been done by the renowned worthies of the world: but there are no exploits nor achievements, so renowned as those that been done by *faith*.

The Scripture give us many instances of this kind; and shews us how greatly the Lord Jesus Christ was pleased with the lively actings of his peoples faith. Faith is of great price with, and shall obtain great praise from the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this *chapter*, you have a most notable victory that was obtained by a poor woman, by the power and strength of her faith. Here a poor weak woman by the strength of her faith

wrestling with Jesus Christ, obtains the victory; that he could no longer hold but grants her request. Her faith did notably discover it self in putting her upon *suing to Christ*. Nature will send men in their distresses to *natural helps*; but faith will send them to Christ, to seek their help in him. And then her faith discovers it self in putting her upon *pursuing of Christ*. Christ seems to give a repulse to her faith, *he answereth her not a word*; he was resolved to put her faith to it: that he might exercise her faith. Yea when the *Disciples* came to speak for her; he answered, *I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. But she makes another onset upon Christ. Then came she, and worshipped, saying, *Lord help me*. Well, but he gives her another repulse, he seems to put her off with a check; 'tis not meet to give the *Childrens bread to dogs*. But behold the importunity of faith; she pursues the victory still, she confesses that she was but a dog, but she pleads that she might have the privilege of a dog: even the *dogs have the crumbs that fall from their masters table*, and though I be a dog, yet let me have the crumbs. Well now, he could no longer hold, but, as *Joseph* he breaks out in the praise of this womans faith. *O woman great is thy faith*.

In *Luke 5*. you have the *sick of the Palsie* suing to Christ for cure and observe how earnest he is, when they could not find which way to come to Christ, they *went to the house top and let him down in the midst before Jesus*. Here was a lively faith indeed, it could by no means

be kept off from Christ, and how greatly was Christ pleased with this? *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.* O this was the voice that faith would have had: this was the word that faith looked for. As Christ is pleased with faith, so he gratifies it, and gives it the answer that it would have, what word can be so sweet to faith, as *Son thy sins are forgiven thee?*

Quest. But why is Christ so greatly pleased with his peoples faith.

Ans. First, Because this is the great thing commanded by him. Christ layes more stresse upon this command than upon all the rest: to wit the command of believing, *John 6. 29. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. This is THE work of God.* THE work with an emphasis, none to this, This is the great command, *1 John 3. 23. This is his command, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* There are many other commands, but this is the great command of all. And therefore 'tis that Christ doth so generally please himself in his peoples faith: because this is the great thing that he requires of us.

Secondly, Because this is that which doth set so great esteem upon him. Christ prizes faith, for faith above all things prizes Christ, and gives glory to Christ. Christ is not magnified and glorified in any thing so much, as by his peoples faith. Faith empties us of our selves, and gives all the glory to Jesus: makes us vile in our own eyes, and magnifies Christ

in our eyes, *1 Pet. 2. 7. Unto you therefore that believe he is precious.* Faith and Christ they are mutually precious one to another. O the sweet embraces there are between these two friends when they meet ! O precious faith, faith *Christ*, *2 Pet. 1. 1.* And O precious Christ, faith faith. O precious Savior, faith faith, and O precious servant, faith Christ. Faith faith, *none but Christ* ; and *Christ* faith, *none but faith* : *only believe.* Sith therefore *Christ* is so precious unto faith, no wonder that faith is so precious unto Christ.

Now then beloved, stir up your faith ; abound in the lively exercise of your faith : and thereby you may be very pleasing to Jesus *Christ* nothing will please him like this. If thou art a believer, I know it is in thine heart to please thy Lord. If thou knewest what would please him, woulst thou not do it ? How is the church pleased, to think how she would please Jesus Christ ? *Cant. 1. 12. While the King sitteth at his Table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.* It gave her great content, to think how she would please Jesus Christ. Would you know how to please Jesus Christ ? here you are directed : be much in believing, learn the skil of believing ; be much in the exercise of your faith. As *David* danced before the *Ark* with all his might, so put forth your faith with vigor and activity. In this above all things you will be pleasing to Jesus Christ. We read how *Herod* was pleased with *Herodias* daughter when she danced before him, *Mar. 6, 22,* insomuch that he sware to her, to give her
her

ber what she should ask, even to the half of his Kingdom. Thus do thou put forth thy faith in a lively activity, and he will be pleased infinitely with this, that he will swear to thee thou shalt have thy asking. Now for a lively faith, to lay hold of Christ. Where is thy faith, Christian, try now what thy faith can do.

Quest. But wherein should your faith act so vigorously, that you may please Jesus Christ?

Ans. First, In a way of Annihilation. Or emptying your selves of your selves. This was the way, the Centurions faith did please Christ so much, making him so little in his own eyes. And this was the way the woman of Canaan did please Christ with her faith. Faith is a grace that will exceedingly little us, and abase us, it will make thee that art as big as a Camel, to be little enough to go through an eye of a needle. It will make thee seem less and worse then nothing. It will make thee not onely to cease admiring thy self, but to abhor thy self, and repent in dust and ashes. It will shew thee what Christ is; and seeing him by thee, thou shalt disappear, and see nothing in thy self but unworthiness. The glow-worm shines in the night; but when the day Springs it cannot so much as be seen. When this Orient Sun Christ ariseth, to the eye of faith, then self will not be seen, it will not appear. Faith will lay thee where thou shouldst be, in the dust. And then Christ will be where he should be, in the Throne. When man stands for a Cypher then Christ signifies somewhat indeed. When man sets down himself for a Bankrupt, then he
sues

fues out for the *unsearchable riches of Christ*.
 O be much in exercising thy faith, and that will
 empty thee to purpose. This is the language of
 faith, Lord I am undone, do thou set me up, I
 am a Bankrupt, do thou pay my debt. Lord,
 my righteousness is but rags: my beauty, is
 but rottenness: my pedigree, is but baseness:
 my portion, meer poverty: my power, meer
 infirmity: Lord, here is work for thee: help
 Lord! This is the language of faith: and there-
 fore it is, that Christ and faith do fit so well to-
 gether. Faith hath need of every thing that
 Christ hath, and Christ hath a supply for eve-
 ry want that Faith hath. As for unbelievers,
 they make light of Christ, they are rich, and
 need not his gold: they are well, and have no
 need of his salve. But now faith, that empties
 and humbles the man, and makes him to sue
 out to Christ: faith will fetch out all that is in
 Christ. Lord, here is a beggar for thy bounty
 Here is a *Lazarus*, for thy cure. Here is a
 palsie hand, a blind eye, here is a wound for
 thy salve. Christ, he comes as an open foun-
 tain, and faith brings an empty vessel. Christ
 comes with a full purse, and faith with an emp-
 ty hand. Christ comes with an open hand, and
 faith with an open mouth. Christ comes giv-
 ing, and faith comes gaping. Faith comes,
 Lord, here is a belly for thee to fill: here is a
 back for thee to cover. I am poor and am rob-
 bed of all, I have not a penny left, and none
 can help me but thee, I starve unlesse thou help.
 Thus faith comes as a hungry child fixes his ey
 upon the eye of his Father, earnestly looking
 upon

upon him, when some relief will come to him: so doth faith upon Christ, looking when somewhat will come to him.

Secondly, *By way of acceptance*, receiving of Christ, *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God even to them that believe on his name, John 1. 12.* Faith sits like the cripple at the beautiful gate of the Temple to receive an alms. Beloved, the Gospel is the great Mart, and your Souls are the ship, and faith is the receiver, to take in the lading. O let your faith be active, that you may go away greatly loaden. As Christ said, *receive you the holy Ghost*, so do you receive Christ: accept of Christ, while he tenders himself to you. While he is tendering himself to you, let your Souls answer, Lord, with my whole heart do I accept thee, I take thee at thy word to all intents and purposes. I take thee not onely to receive thy pay, but to fight under thy banner: not onely to be justified by thy righteousness, but to be governed by thy laws. This is the great and vital act of faith, that is of absolute necessity to salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ is offered to you. In the name of the eternal God I offer him to you all; see that you take him by faith. O faith faith Lord I accept thee, you will all say we will have Christ, we must perish else: but consider it, be not rash, know the manner of your husband: if you will have Christ, you must not live as you list: you must be under government, and strict government, you must not have him and the world too; you must cast your worldly hopes

hopes over board. You must take him upon his own conditions. His condition is very low sometimes in the world, sometimes he hath a bed, and sometimes he hath none: you must run all hazards with him; you must *suffer with him if you will reign with him*. Now what saith your faith to this? O faith faith, I will take him with all my heart. Faith saith as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Ruth* 1. 16. *whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God*. But how must your faith accept of Christ?

(First,) *Accept the person of Christ*. The Lord Jesus Christ is offered in a marriage covenant to you in the Gospel: and a marriage, is not between a person and *patrimony*; but person and person: true faith is not onely for the *benefits* of Christ but the *person* of Christ. There is great difference between the *sick man*, and the *sick spouses* taking the *physician*: the sick man takes him for his *skill*; but the spouse for his *person*. The sick man takes him till the cure be done, and than values not the physician: but the spouse for hers in all conditions for ever; she takes his person. Thus must your faith do; you must chuse the Lord Jesus Christ, not for the *salvation* onely that he brings, but the *excellency* that is in him. As Christ will not be contented with any thing of yours, but you: so should you do, be contented with nothing of Christ, but himself.

Secondly, You must *accept the pardon of Christ*. Christ, with his person doth offer you all his benefits. And as 'tis in marriage that

that then, and then onely, and not otherwise shall the wife have the State. So take Christ and you have all the benefits that come by him. He comes with his pardon in his hand, and if you will accept him, you shall have his pardon by him.

(Thirdly,) *The promises of Christ.* All the promises are in him yea, and in him Amen. Take Christ and you may lay hold of all the promises as yours.

(Fourthly,) *The purchase of Christ.* 'tis a Kingdome that is offered to you all, in the Gospel: take Christ, and you shall be heirs of a Kingdom. Lay hold of Christ, and you do at the same time lay hold of eternal life.

Thirdly, *By way of exultation,* rejoycing in Christ, triumphing in Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *Thanks be to God, that giveth us always cause to triumph in Christ.* Your faith should be triumphing, you should triumph in the victory, mercy, merit, promises, riches, kingdom of Christ. O you that are believers, you have cause indeed always to triumph in Christ. what! have you received the Lord Jesus Christ? are you married to such a Husband? O how should you boast of him, O how should you please him? how should you glory in the booty that you have got? you have got a prize indeed. Thou that hast got Christ, hast a husband indeed: let your hearts rejoyce in him. Thou art a believer, thou are really espoused to Jesus Christ: thou mayst make as real a claim to the Lord Jesus Christ, as a wife to her Husband. And thou mayest make as
real

real a claim to the purchase of Jesus Christ, as a wife to the state and goods of her Husband. These are not vain and empty words: no, no, there is the greatest reality in the world in this; 'tis as true as any thing in the world can be true. Thou hast a real interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, and may'st boldly make thy claim to him as thine own Husband: do I speak any thing but what the Lord hath spoken? *you are married unto Christ that was raised from the dead; that you might bring fruit unto God, Rom. 7. 4.* mark, 'tis not my word, 'tis Gods word. Take heed thou dost not blaspheme: dost thou think that God doth go to deceive thee? far be it from thy thoughts. Believer, 'tis so: of a truth Christ is thine; thy husband, and thou may'st boldly lay claim to him. Consider what a husband Christ is: is not he the King of the Kings of the earth? This is he unto whom Angels, and authorities and powers are made subject: This is he whom all the Angels of God do worship: Heaven and earth are at his beck: he is exalted above all heavens, and hath a name above every name that is named: this is thy beloved and friend. O should not thy faith triumph in him?

Fourthly, *By way of resignation*, in giving up your selves to Jesus Christ. Faith, as it takes Christ, so it delivers up the soul to Christ. Faith makes a happy exchange for us, giving away the man to Christ, and receiving Christ for us. Thus, between Christ and a believer, there is a mutual delivery of themselves over to one another. As faith receives Christ, so

it gives up the soul to Christ, and all that it hath; Lord, faith faith, I here resign to thee: I quit all claim to my self, I am not my own: and will own it henceforth, that I have no right to my self. I give up soul and body to thee: I will hold back no part of the price. And as faith takes first the *person* of Christ, and then the *benefits* of Christ: so it gives away the *person* of the man to Christ, and then with the person it gives *all the rest*; the estate, interest, and all to Jesus Christ, thus you should be exercising your faith.

Fifthly, *By way of Adoration*, thus faith should put forth its self upon Christ: casting our *Crowns* before him: setting up the Lord Jesus Christ in the throne of his own excellency, and we should admire nothing but him, breaking in pieces all our Idols, and pulling them down, that Christ alone may be exalted.

Sixthly, *By way of Appreciation*, prizing and esteeming of Christ, debasing self and all other excellencies in comparison of Christ: accounting all things but dung for Christ, such was *Pauls* faith.

Seventhly, *By way of Appropriation*, so your faith should put forth it self. It should not only put forth it self in a way of *Affiance* onely, leaning upon Christ: but in a way of *assurance*. You should labor to come up to this, not only to believe that Christ dyed for his people in general; but to believe his death was intended for you in particular to appropriate him to your self. Thus faith acts upon Christ. This was
Tho-

Thomas, his faith when once it was stirred up.
My Lord, and my God. Applying Christ to
 himself as his Lord, saith saith, I am weak,
 but thou art my strength. I am a sinner, but
 thou art my righteousness, I am unclean, but
 thou art my sanctification. I am miserable, but
 thou art my redemption.

A Sa



SACRAMENTAL

Speech grounded on,

Mark i. 15.

Repent ye, and beleive the Gospel.

MY dearly beloved brethren, you have often heard our Savior preaching to you by his Ambassadors : but now he is come to preach to you, as it were, in his own person. What was said of *Abel* is true of Christ, *he being dead yet speaketh*. Christ being dead yet preacheth to you.

But what doth Christ preach to you, now he is dead ?

Why, he preacheth no other thing to you, now he is dead, than he did in his life : Repent, and believe the Gospel. That, Christ preacheth to you, faith and repentance, repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, *Repentance towards God*, see here
Q
Christi-

Christian what thy sins hath done. Now is a time to have your hearts filled with sorrow, and your faces with shame, to see what you have brought upon Jesus Christ. Look upon him, every wound in his body, and thorn in his head, calls upon thee to repent. The wounds in his side, and the blood that flowed from thence, calls upon thee to repent. Now let thy repentance by stirring, seeing he calls thee to repentance, what shall stir thee up to repent, if this shall not? here you may see the Lords severewrath against sin. See it here in the beloved Son of God, who is slain before your eyes for your sins. Ah, Christian, if thou hadst stood with *Abraham*, and seen the fire of *Sodom*. Or with *Adam*, and seen God commanding, and then thrusting them out of the garden. If thou hadst been in heaven, and seen what the wrath of God did there, what work it made when the *Angels* sinned. Or if thou hadst been in hell, and seen and heard the damned there, how wouldst thou look upon thy sin? O see here, more than all this; Gods wrath burning against his own Son, for thy sin.

O see here the love of Christ! in vain were all thy tears and sorrow, had not Christ made way for thee. O see him, and hear him speaking from the crosse, my wounds shall heal thy soul, if thou wilt but repent. These hands shall work out thy salvation, if thou wilt but return and repent. Ah sinner! what is not thy soul melted yet? methinks I should hear thee making thy submission, and return to the Lord, as one that melteth at the word of his Lord.

Lord

Lord is thy mind thus? shall I have all this if I will but repent? behold, I cover my head with sackcloth. I am the offender, as for this lamb what hath he done? O Lord it repenteth me of my rebellions: I lay down my weapons: I swear, I will be a resolved enemy against sin, as long as I live.

Secondly, *Another thing that Christ in his costly death preacheth to you, is faith.* Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, he calls upon you to believe now he is upon his crosse. Methinks I hear him calling upon you from the crosse. Believe the reality and greatness of my love. Believe the infiniteness of my power. The full expiation of all thy sins. The truth of all Gods threatnings. The certainty of all my promises. Thy unquestionable right and title to the Kingdom of glory.

First, *Believe the reality and greatness of my love.* Methinks he speaks thus to thee, O man, what should I have done more to testify my love to thee than I have done? read all the Antiquities, and see whether there was any love like mine! thou canst not believe, but that thy parents love thee, when they take care of thee: but whose love is like mine? did these ever suffer for thee or do for thee what I have done? what are all these sufferings that I have suffered for thee? did I despise my fathers glory, and leave it for thee, & did not love thee? O slow of heart to believe all that I have done and suffered for thee! if I did not love thee, what should move me to dye for thee? did any thing in thee? no, did any profit from thee

move me? no, I knew that man is not profitable to God. Was it any returns from thee? no, I knew how thou wouldst be: how unkind thou wouldst be to me. O Christian, doubt not of my love to thee. Doubt not of my help, dost thou think that I would give my self for thee, and will not give my hand for thee? do not doubt that I will cast thee off, dost thou think that I have suffered all this for thee, and that I will cast thee off at last? no, no.

Secondly, *Believe the infiniteness of my power.* This is the language of Christ from his crosse, believe the exceeding greatnesse of my power. He speaks thus: O man, what if thou shouldst have no friend but I, cannot I uphold thee? These shoulders, that did bear up under all that Hell could invent against me, shall not they uphold thee? fear not to commit thy self with confidence to me. See, I am able to keep what thou committest to my trust.

Thirdly, *Believe the full expiation of all thy sins.* I am here a satisfaction for thy sin. Fear not, I am thy atonement, thy peace, thy propitiation of thy sins, what though thou art empty? behold the fulness of my satisfaction, what am I here for? I am cut off, but not for my self, 'tis for thee. This is my meaning in my death: this is the end why I am upon the crosse, to make expiation for sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. All you like sheep are gone astray, and God hath laid on me the iniquities of you all. Believe it, God will not require the debt of the principal and surety too. Dost conscience trouble thee at any time? sprinkle

it but with this blood, and it will be at peace. Art thou afraid to come into the presence of God? do but carry me with thee, and thou shalt be safe.

Fourthly, *Believe the truth of all Gods threatnings*: here thou seest all the threatnings of God executed upon me. See here, and believe what God will do to those that go on in their trespasses. If he laid so much on me, what will he do to them? believe also his threatnings of correcting you, if you sin: for he will punish your sins with rods, and your iniquities with chastisements.

Fifthly, *Believe the certainty of all my promises*, this is another word that Christs crosse and death speaks to you, what is the meaning of this death of mine, and of this blood and satisfaction of mine, but that the covenant might be ratified, and all the promises sealed, and nothing diminished, but all my Testament and covenant might be ratified for ever? Behold, this blood that flows from my wounds is sprinkled upon the people for the purifying of them. All is as sure as my death and blood can make them. Here thou seest all ratified in my blood. Man, thinkest thou that I would dye with a lye in my mouth? dost thou think that I would suffer all this for thee, if I meant not to do thee good?

Sixthly, *Believe thy unquestionable right and title to the Kingdom of glory*. Why here thou dost see the price and ransome, the money paid down: and what meaneth all this thinkest thou, but to buy in thy name into the inheritance?

Now Christians, where is your faith? O methinks your sails should be up. Methinks you should be triumphing, though you are here in the world. As *Paul, Who is he that condemns? it is Christ that died.* Why? what objections can be made? what can unbelief say, that cannot be answered here in the death of Christ? shall I muster up all its force, & tell you what the death of Christ doth speak to it? give me leave to touch upon some of them.

First, methinks I hear unbelief objecting from the *terribleness of Gods threatnings.* O sayes the soul, my heart melteth within me, while I hear the wrath of God threatned against sin. methinks I come lately from Mount *Sinai*, wher I heard the Law given with the Trumpet, & a shout, and a curse pronounced upon all that kept not the words of this Law. O how can my soul bear up against all these curses?

But now how sweetly doth the crosse of Christ, and death of Christ answer thy fears? Hear thy Saviors language.

O soul be not afraid, do not thou fear and flag: all these threatnings were intended against me; all wer fulfilled upon me. Justice hath nothing to say to thee: all the curses are met together upon me. That is the meaning of it: that thou mayst be free, though I take in the wrath of the Lord into my own body. Oh! behold me, behold me: see how full I am of the wrath of God in body and soul: *my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.*

Methinks I should hear thee say, now Lord,
I see

I see my liberty, in thy bonds. My salvation, in thy torment and pain. I have seen thy sorrow and out-cry, and understood the meaning and intent of all: that it was to remove the curse from me. Now arise O my soul and inherit the blessing. Therefore was Christ *made a curse that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.* What was the blessing of Abraham? *I will bless thee, and make thee a blessing. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee.* And again, *I establish my Covenant between me and thee.* Rejoyce, O my soul rejoyce, and let my soul rejoyce in God my Saviour. O my soul, God hath blessed thee, and shall bless thee. Fear not, now the mouth of the Law is for ever stopt thou shalt never hear one curse more of the flaming mouth of the Law. O soul, what canst thou wish for that is not laid up in the everlasting covenant? he hath said, he will be a God to thee. Canst thou be able to know the immensity of his covenant? all is made over to thee.

Second, *Object.* But sin begins to rise up. The soul begins to cry out of his sins: O the *multitude, multitude of my sins!* they are gone over my head, and I am sore afraid, I have nothing to pay my debt.

But hear now what Christ speaks to thee. This is the language of his death and wounds, fear not sin. *Have I been so long with thee and dost thou not know me, Philip?* so saith he to thy soul, what! been here so long with me, and conversed with me so long, and dost thou

not know me yet? are thy sins infinite, and are not my mercies infinite? are thy sins great, and am not I God above all, equal with the father? O look unto me, and rest in the fulness of my satisfaction: I am thy surety. All thy debts be upon me: all thy wants are upon me, what if thou hast nothing to pay? I have enough for me and thee. I am the *Scape-goat* that have carried away thy sin into a land of *forgetfulness*, I have slain the enmity of sin upon the crosse, and have reconciled you to my Father. Here is redemption, full redemption, plentiful redemption, behold, my blood speaketh peace to you. Wilt thou not believe the voyce of my death and blood to thee? thus Christ's death can speak sufficiently to all that thy sins can say against thee.

Now doth not thy faith stand upright yet, Christian? methinks I should hear thee say, Lord 'tis enough, thou hast laid down thy life for a ranfome: I see my cure in thy wounds. I doubt not but thy blood is sufficient to cleanse me from all my sins.

And who now shall appear against me? Ah Justice, once a terrible word, now I can see thy face with comfort. Once Justice was so terrible, as never was the face of a judge more terrible to the prisoner at the bar, than that to me, but now 'tis pleasing to me. Once, I had rather have fallen into the lions mouth, than to come to it. O how did my soul grow pale, and my heart ready to dye like *Nabals* within me, when I saw the *ballance* held up in one hand, and the *sword* in the other! but now, I see, that the death

death of Christ and his blood shall be put into the ballance with me, I am not afraid. Here now see a great wonder: the pure holyness of God taking pleasure in a sinner: and the strictest justice shaking hands with the offender, now the justice of God is become my friend.

Third, *Object*. O but unbelief seems yet to object from the *multitude, and strength, and policy of the enemy*. Methinks I see the trembling soul in the posture of the prophets man, who beheld the mountain beset with Charriots and Horses, and crying out *O Master! what shall we do?* If it were but flesh and blood it were not altogether so much: but 'tis principalities, and powers; who can break thorow the *host of these Philistines*? But Christian, look to this crosse: look to a dying *Christ*, look what his death speaks to thee, wherefore art thou ready to fall with these fears, and ready to sink under them? methinks, I see him taking thee by the hand as he did *Peter*, *O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* look here by my cross, and see all thine enemies lye slain by my death: and what wilt thou be afraid, that thy slain-enemies will rise again, and pursue thee? methinks, soul, I should hear thee triumphing and crying out, what can you do, O my enemies? I have seen *captivity led Captive*: and for whom did he overcome but for me? as for me, now I will throw out the gantlet, and bid defiance to my enemies. *Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that dyed, who shall separate us from the love (or death) of Christ? shall tribulation, or distresse, &c.* Nay in all these

these things we are more than conquerors &c. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, &c. shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I see now all overcome in the death of Christ. Devils, I fear you not; I behold all your legions in chains, and made captives by Christ. Death, I fear thee not; for I know that thou art slain, by him that had the power of death and devils. I know that thy commission is altered, and thou comest, not with authority to arrest me; but with an invitation, to invite me to feast with the Lord. And thanks be to God who hath given us the victory.

To



*To the most beloved people the
flock of Christ in Taunton,
Salvation.*

Loving and most dearly beloved,

I have lately received your affectionate letter; and though I never question your affections to me, and need no verbal testimony; yet I cannot but take it thankfully, and read it delightfully, when I see it attested under your own hands. And I cannot but tell you, you are the people of my cares, the desire of my eyes, the people of my delights, & of my prayers. My labors with you for many years, though some time attended with difficulty, and danger, yet were not tedious; but my time passed like *Jacobs*, when he served for *Rachel* and my sufferings for you are not irksome, through grace, because I trust they are for your edification, and are a seal of my love to you, and more especially of the doctrine of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, which I have long preached among you. The Lord God teach me, with humility, and thankfulness to bear such honor,
that

that I should be set for the defence, and confirmation of the Gospel. And now, my dearly beloved, (though you should not be insensible of Gods great visitation upon you, yet) I would not have you inordinately disquieted, that I am removed from you to a prison for a season; but rather imitate the Heroick vertue of that most gracious mother, in the *Martyrologie*; who, when the Son of her bowels came, not to a prison, but to a stake to be sacrificed in the flames for Christ, fell down on her knees, and blessed the Lord, that ever she should be so happy, as to have a Son to suffer for Jesus Christ. Ah my dear flock! how glad should I be, if God would send me forthwith among you again, to feed you as in the dayes of old, and to go in and out before you, that you might find pasture? yet be not dismayed, *fear not little flock*; though you are little, and despised, and *hated of all men for Christs name sake*; Christs relation to you, and tenderness of you is such, that you cannot miscarry. He liveth, and his care liveth. The Godly wife of that worthy *Cornish* Divine Mr. *Vincent*, being left in great want, with many little Children, would often answer them, when they came crying about her for bread, and she had none to give, with this gracious expression, *be quiet children, our God liveth*. And surely, that, my brethren, may be a quieting, comforting consideration, both for you and me, though the bread do sadly fail. But at length this gracious woman, being left quite destitute, and her children calling upon her, when she had neither bread

bread nor money, breaks out into a bitter weeping, which one of the little ones observing, he comes, and puls his mother by the Apron, saying, Mother why do you weep thus? *Is God dead now?* such a rebuke did the Lord send her, by the mouth of a poor babe. Brethren be not dismayed, Christ liveth, and therefore let your *hopes* live, let your *courage* live, let your *faith* live also. Christ liveth ever, therefore *let your hearts live for ever*, *Psal. 22. 26.* He liveth to make intercession for you, and from his living, you may be assured of life, *John 14. 19.* of your Justification, *Rom. 8. 34.* Of your Salvation, *Rom. 5. 10.*

Beloved, do but seriously think of *Christ's relation* to you, and you cannot want comfort. Why, *he is not ashamed to call you Brethren.* Even when he was entred upon his state of exaltation, risen from the dead, far above the state of mortals, he own'd poor weak believers for his brethren, *John 20. 17. Go to my Brethren. Math. 28. 10. Go tell my Brethren.* Yea when he cometh with all his holy Angels with him, and sits upon the throne of his glory, he will own the very least, and lowest among poor believers, before all the world, for his Brethren, *Math. 25. 31. with ver. 40.* keep this, my beloved, as a Cordial at your heart, that Christ stands related to you as your *Brother.* Ah what consolation is here for a considering Christian! For, First, *This may give you boldness with him,* and that, both *in your coming to him. and at his coming to you.* I say *in your coming to him.* It may make you come with

with *boldness to the throne of grace*, that you have such a friend in court, that can have what he will, that is indeed all and in all in heaven: that you have a kinsman, a Brother there, a man like unto your selves, of the same race, and nature, and so sensible of humane infirmity, *Heb. 4. 15, 16.* Christs humane nature, by which he is a Brother to us, may make us come boldly and with full assurance, *Heb. 10. 19, 20, 22.* We might tremble to approach Gods terrible Majesty, to come near the consuming fire, but that we have a brother like unto us, a daies-man, a Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, between God and us. Again, it may give us boldness *at his coming to us.* Let not the Terror he will com with affright us Christians; for he is our brother, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. Had even *Dives* himself a regard of his *Brethren*, that they might not come into that place of torment? and shall we think, *Christ* will send his brethren thither? How secure would he be whose life or estate were in controversie; if the matter were put into the hand of his own brother? Secondly, *Then you may presume upon your interest in him.* You may have boldness to speak and confidence to speed. You may make use of him, on all occasions, for your selves, and for your friends. You cannot stretch your interest. He upbraideth not that you make too bold, or come too often, or ask too much. Thirdly, *Then you may depend upon it that he will help in extremity.* For a friend loves at all times, and a brother

brother is born for adversity, *Pro. 17. 17.* He is not such a brother as *Dauids* were *Psa. 69. 8.* Or as *Jobs* were, *Job 6. 14, 15, 16, 17.* He will own and delight in his, in their afflictions, *Canticles 2. 14.* 4. you may not question his affection. Love is the Natural duty, between Brethren, *1 Pet. 3. 8.* Christ hath not onely the name but the heart of a brother. He is not such a brother as *Cain*, that said, *am I my brothers keeper*, that hated his brother in his heart. Nor as *Jacob*, that took his brother by the heel, a supplanter, that deceived him of the birth-right. But such a brother as *Joseph* was, who was all along his eminent type. 1. *Joseph* Received great unkindnesses, and wretched usage from his Brethren. They conspired against his life; they sold him and pitied him not, when they saw the anguish of his soul. And is not the blood of Christ to be found upon the skirts of his Brethren? Touch him, and the body will bleed upon you. Look upon his mangled body: why, these are the wounds that he hath received in the house of his friends, by the hands of his brethren: I mean by their sins. *Isa. 53. 5.* 2dly. He shewed melting affections to his brethren after their unkindness to him. He weeped aloud over them, *Gen. 45. 1, 2.* to wit with tears of love, and joy. His bowels yearned over his brother, and he seeks where to weep, *Gen. 43. 30.* But there are no bowels to *Christs*. No yearnings like to his. How unkindly had his brethren dealt with him? One sold him, another denyed him, all forsook him. Yet when one would have expected a Mes-

Message of defiance he sends them a message
 of peace. The sweetest tidings that ever
 were sent; *John 20. 17.* Thirdly, *Joseph* was
 sent before to provide for his brethren, *Gen.*
45. 5. So is Christ. It is his business in hea-
 ven to prepare, and provide for his brethren.
 The provision you have for soul and body is
 from him: but all this is but as the corn to keep
 you alive upon the way. What is the store,
 that *Joseph* hath laid up in *Egypt*? the prepara-
 tions that Christ hath made in heaven! Fourth-
 ly, *Joseph* saved the lives of his brethren, that
 sought his, *Gen. 45. 7.* And hath not Christ sa-
 ved them that had their hands in his death?
 Fifthly, *Joseph* when he frowned with greatest
 severity, had his heart full of yearnings, and
 tenderness to his brethren. He spake rough-
 ly but could not forbear to turn about, and
 weep. *Gen. 42. 24.* So it is with Christ. He
 seems to repulse the woman of *Canaan*, and
 to put her off; but you know what was all the
 while in his heart. When he speaks hard say-
 ings, and writes bitter things, and uses us
 roughly, his thoughts are *thoughts of peace,*
and not of evil; peace is in his heart; He doth
 it but for your trial. When he seems to have
 forsaken you, he is but a withdrawing behind
 the curtain. He seems to have exposed you to
 perish, as *Moses* among the flags; but you
 see not how he stands like *Moses his Sister* be-
 hind the bush, wistly looking, what was done
 with her brother, the child. Sixthly, God so
 over ruled the wickedness of *Joseph* his bre-
 thren, that it tends greatly, to their good and
 his


his preferment. So that God made, that horrid sin in slaying Christ to be for our salvation, & his exaltation, *Phil. 2. 1, 9, 10.* And the Lord hath preferred him as *Pharaoh* did *Joseph*, *Gen. 41. 41, 42, 43, 44.* Seventhly, *Joseph* provided for his brethren the fat, and the best of all the land. *Gen. 47. 11.* He bid, slay, and make ready when his brethren were to be with him. *Gen. 43. 16.* And doth not Christ *mingle his wine, and kill his Oxen, and his fatlings, and think nothing is to good?* *Prov. 9. Math. 22.* He calls for the *best robe, and fatted calf*, *Luke 15.* He prepares for you a *Goshen*, the good land, the inheritance of the Saints in light. *Luke 22. 28, 29, 30.* Eighthly, *Joseph* was never satisfied, though he had all the glory of *Egypt*, till he had his brethren down to him. As *Haman*, in another case; boasted of the glory of his riches, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, above the Princes and servants of the King; and yet, sayes he, *all this avails me nothing, &c.* so all the glory to which Christ is exalted, far above all principalities, and powers, will not content him till he hath his brethren with him; in no worse a place, and no worse a case then himself. *John 17. 24.* Ninthly, *Joseph* presents his brethren unto *Pharaoh*, and leads them into his presence. *Gen. 47. 2.* so doth Christ for believers. He leads them to the father, *John 14. 6.* *Josephs* brethren, who would otherwise have been an abomination (being herdsmen) yet were treated kindly for *Josephs* sake, *Gen. 47.* And so doth God to us

for our brothers sake. To conclude, what affliction is there, wherein *Christs* relation to you will not yield abundant consolation? But I have exceeded, pardon me: it is for two weeks: having been necessarily diverted from writing to you the week foregoing. The Lord teach you to live upon these cordials, in these sorrowful dayes. Fare you well, dear brethren: farewell in the Lord.

I am yours

*in
the bonds of the*

Lord Jesus Christ.



*To the much beloved, the flock
 of Christ in Taunton;
 grace, and peace.*

Most Loving, and beloved.

Y Our prisoner in the Lord hath sent
 these lines to salute you, and to call
 upon you, or rather to beseech you,
*to walk worthy of the high calling in
 which you are called in Jesus Christ.* Beloved,
 our word with you hath not been *yea, and nay*,
 uncertain and unstedfast. The prison sounds
 forth to you the same doctrine, that the pulpit
 ever did: the Lord give you to hear; and re-
 ceive from the *prisoner*, that which was not so
 thorowly embraced from the *preacher*. But
 what doth the prison preach? it preaches *re-
 pentance* to you. God hath called to you
 from the pulpit often, and now he sendeth to
 you from the prison, that you should repent.
 Who is so deaf, as not to hear the louds calls
 of the living God to *England*, that they should
 repent? you have long had *Moses and the Pro-
 phets*; but now the Lord hath sent you; as it

were, what *Dives* asked; that one should come to you *from the dead* and testifie to you that you should repent. From the dead, I say for you know, that in the sence of the *Law*, your Ministers are dead. But being dead we yet speak; yea our death; our removal, our silence doth speak; and all speaks the same thing, that you should repent. O that I could lift up my voyce to you; that your streets, your houses, your ears, your hearts might be fil'd with this cry, repent O *Taunton*; repent and turn. Repent O profane, or else your iniquities will be your ruine. Repent O professors or else the Lord will not repent of the evil that he is about to bring upon us. The Lord now ringeth that thundring peal in your ears: *Cleanse your hands ye sinners, purifie your hearts ye double-minded, Draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh unto you. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. O hear the voyce of the Lord. He that hath an ear to hear let him hear. Repent, O back sliding Children, or else the Lord will fill you with your own wayes. Speedily make up the breach, and endeavor to repair your decayes, to regain your ground, and recover your first love. O at last bethink your selves, from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first works. Repent O sluggard; when wilt thou awake out of thy sleep? what hath God kindled a fire in his Church, ready to devour us all, and wilt thou*

thou sleep with the house on fire about thine ears? What? wilt thou not ply thy bucket, and settle to thy work to purpose? wilt thou lye still and see the Tide coming in upon thee? whatnot *pluck thy hand out of thy Bosom, nor rise out of thy bed-sloth*, when the Almighty thunders from heaven, and scatters his lightning, and sends abroad the tokens of his displeasure? repent *O Laodicean*. The Lord calleth to thee to be *zealous and repent*. Away with this lukewarm profession. Away with this heartlesse, listlesse, livelesse Religion. The Lord hates this halting and halving in Religion. As good not at all, as not to purpose. Never dream that lazie wishes and idle complaints, and key-cold prayers, will carry it.

Judge in your own selves; *is this* the seeking, knocking, striving, fighting, running, wrestling, that the *Scripture* every where requires, as necessary to all that would be saved: but especially necessary at such a day of rebuke *as this is*? O quicken your selves, call up all your powers, and put you every man his strength to the rope. Cry mightily *as Nineveh* did. Humble your selves greatly before the Lord *as Manasseh* did. Let prayer be made *without ceasing night and day*, if ever you mean to pray open the prisons, and recover your spiritual priviledges. Repent O thou of *Sardis*, that *hast a name to live but art dead*. The name may serve to deceive thy self, and to deceive others, but *God will not be mocked*: he searcheth the heart. O prepare for *his* search and for *his* scrutiny. Wo unto thee,

if he pronounce of thee, and write against thee as against *Belshazzar*; thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting. Hear the voyce of the living God; hear and live. Remember what you have received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent: and be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to dye, lest the Lord come upon you as an enemy at unawares. Repent O worldly professor, that hast Christ in thy mouth and *Mammon* in thy heart. Ah what a *Demas* wilt thou quickly shew thy self, except thou repent! how sadly will the fears of loosing thy estate betray thee! How surely will the cares of *this* world choak thee! how surely will the prevailing love of earthly things undo thee! except thou repent, O study the vanity and vexation of the Creatures; the emptinesse, insufficiency, transitorinesse of present enjoyments; the superlative excellency of Jesus Christ, and his exceeding great reward, till thy very heart do breath with the *Martyr*; none but Christ; and with *Paul*, doubtless I account all things but losse, &c. O sinner pray over, and study over these things, till thy heart be brought to a low esteem of perishing things. Walk so often with death, till thou art dead to the world, and canst look upon it, as a man would, that should peep out of his grave. Repent, O sleeper, that livest in carnal security, and layest not to heart the afflictions of *Joseph*. Doth the whole world ring of Gods Judgments upon *England*, and dost not thou awake yet, and call upon thy God? is the Church afflicted, and tossed with tempests,
and

and not comforted, and yet art not thou roused up? *is* the ship even filled with water, and the disciples crying; *Master save us, we perish*, and all in jeopardy, and yet art thou unaffected? *is* our Lord ready to be betrayed into the hands of Sinners, and *wilt thou sleep on now?* art thou not yet come to thy senses? Alas, that there should be such a disease as security going now, at such a time *as this!* now methinks the dumb should speak, and the dead should wake. Was the tongue of King *Crasus* his son, dumb from his birth, loosed when he saw his *Father* about to be murdered? and shall the Children of *Zion* see the knife even at the throat or heart of their mother; and yet be silent and unmoved? but what do I dwell on particulars? the Lord calleth on all men every where to repent. Repent, *O officers*, that you have not been so vigilant in the offices which you have born, and in fulfilling the oaths that you have taken, in repressing of abounding sins *as* you should have been. This guilt will lye heavy at many doors, without repentance. Repent, *O Masters*, of your unnecessary hardnesse, and rigor to the bodies; but especially of your cruelty to the souls of your servants. Have you been *as* careful to train them up in the knowledge of *their Creator*, *as* in the knowledge of *your trades?* have you taught them how to pray, *as well as* how to work? and instructed them in the mystery of their salvation, *as much as* in the mystery of their callings? have you looked for *as* good

an account of the principles of Religion, or
 or of the Sermon of them, *as* of the task
 you have set them? and the work in which
 you have employed them? O that you
 had! repent, O you *Husbands*, of your
 harshness, bitterness, not dwelling with your
 wives *as men of knowledge*. Repent, you
Parents, of your fond indulgence to Chil-
 dren, sparing their sins, neglecting their
 souls. Repent you *wives*, of your wilful-
 nesse, and frowardnesse, and disrespectful-
 nesse to them, towards whom the Almighty
 calls for your reverence and obedience. Re-
 pent, O *Children* of your fearful ingratitude,
 in slighting and disobeying your Parents, a
 sin under which the earth do groan. Re-
 pent you *Servants*, of your slothfulness, wast-
 fulnesse, unfaithfulnesse, and eye-service,
 and disobedience, that all families almost
 are filled with the complaint of. O that
 there might be some way to recover the
 credit of Religion from the wounds, that it
 hath received, by the neglect of relative
 duties: well let every man resolve to mend
 one. O see what hath been amisse in your
 hearts, and in your houses, and set upon
 repenting, and reforming. VVithout this
 our prayers will return upon our own heads
 without an Answer. Never think the storm
 will cease, till the *Jonas* be thrown over.
 Beloved, *this is* that, that God doth wait
 for. Throw over the head of *Sheba* and the
 siege will be soon broken up.

I am

I am apt to transgresse. I shall conclude
my Counsels, with my prayers, that a
spirit of Repentance and Reformation may
be poured out upon you, and so rest,

*yours in all manner of
obligations to serve
you and to suffer for
you.*

Joseph Alleine.

To

*To the dearly beloved the
flock of Christ in Taunton,
Salvation.*

Most loving and dearly beloved,

THE care of you *is* continually upon me. I desire no other felicity than to serve the glory of Christ in you : and to enjoy him with you. And blessed be *his* name he *is* no stranger, neither to us, nor you. Let all his prisoners praise him : let all his people praise him. Now *is* the sweetness, beauty, excellency of Christ to be seen. Now may we learn the suavity of his communion, the worth of *his* promises, the all-sufficiency of *his* fulnesse. Now taste and see. Sit you down under the safest, sweetest shadow of *his* protection, and eat of his fruit. *The tree is good for food, and pleasant to the eyes, (except fully blind) And a tree to be desired to make one wise.* Take of the fruit thereof and eat, not *as Jonathan*, who tasted but a little of the honey upon the top of *his* rod, but *eat abundantly*. This *is* no forbidden fruit. Here *is* no surfeiting. You must live upon him every day,

day, and in every duty. May every one of you be able to say *as Paul, to me to live is Christ*: then you live like Christians when Christ is the staff of your life. When Christ is both its *Spring* and its *end*. When you take root in him, and grow up into him. May every one of you be a *tree of Righteousness*, whose roots may spread into him, whose aspiring top may be still shooting upward, reaching out toward him: live *as* those that have *no life* but in him. And study to be able to say *as Paul*, that it is not you that live, but *Christ living in you*. You live in vain while you live not for him: without Christ you are dead while you live. You are *of him*, and *through him*, and *for him*. From whom shall he have glory, if not from you? the inanimate & unreasonable Creatures, cannot praise him, unless in a dumb and silent manner, *as* they are the occasion and incentives of our praising him. The devils and ungodly will not praise him. The silver Trumpet of his praise is found onely in the hands of a few poor believers. Ah! sound you forth his praise in the world; let your lips sing, let your light shine. Let your lives be at last *as* a candle wasted and burnt out in holding forth the light. Now beloved, study that you may go out with comfort, that you may have your hearts *as full as* they can hold, with joy; to think when you are ready to breath forth your last, well my daies are run out for Christ, and my strength is exhausted in the service of Christ. My time is gone, and my labor done, but my Oyl is wasted in the work of God. I have

have spent my Fathers allowance in my Fathers business. This will make you to arise and say, I will go to my Father, with boldness and confidence: and not *as* the *Prodigal*, (when he had spent the portion of goods which his Father had allotted him) with diffidence, and fears of his being rejected. You know my business is but to bespeak you for Christ. I have four requests to present you for him. Thus are my requests, but his Commands.

First, *Let the ballance be turned by Christ*. Let Christ and his interest turn the scale against all the world. Let him be the Pearl, and the world the dung. Let Jesus be King, and Mammon *as* a despised broken Idol, or *as* the stamped Calf. Let Christ be the prize, & the rest but losse. Let gain give way to godliness. Let credit crack rather than Conscience stretch, be no body with the world rather than dishonor Christ, to keep up your reputation with men. Let all the flowers of pleasures wither, the paint fall off this harlots face, when set by Christ. Let the silver shrines and great *Diana* be *as Nebushtan*. *2 Kings 18. 4.* And the crown fall from the head of honour, and the great Idol to come down into the dust before Jesus Christ, and lye like *Dagon* before the Ark, with head and hands broken off upon the threshold. Keep the world *at your feet as a servant*, or rather *under foot as an enemy*. But if it hath the heart you are undone. Where Christ hath not the swaying-interest all is rotten at the bottom.

Secondly, *Let the Byass of your wils be set towards Christ*. The needle of the will was at first

first touched with a *magnetick* vertue, which turn'd it towards God, as the needle is turned towards the pole: but now by the fall it hath quite lost its vertue: and will stand any where, but where it should. But God by sanctifying grace doth new-touch this needle. & though it may (by an accidental violence) be too too easily shaken yet it will *never rest* at a wrong point, but be unquiet and in continual restlessness and agitation till it stand direct towards Christ. If any thing but Christ would content you, you are none of his. Can you acquiesse no where but in him? do your wils cleave to him? is he your settled, resolved choic against all competitors? if so, doubtlesse it is well between you and him. Thus it must be, Christ must have your *assent & consent*. The judgement must *prize* him and the will must *chuse* him as the chief good.

Thirdly, *Let the bent of your affections be to Jesus Christ*. Look upon the height of his stature, and the goodlinesse of his countenance, and you will say surely he is worthy. Surely this is the *Lords annointed*. Frequently, and throughly view his excellencies, till your eye affect your heart. Let me set him among the other objects, like *Saul* among the people. and I must say to you as *Samuel*, see you him whom the Lord hath chosen. *There is none like him*. O let all your affections, be moved at the sight of him, and shout with the joyful people, let the King live, let Christ have all. Let *Sorrow* sit with the melting penitent, weeping at her Saviours feet. Let your strongest burning love be kindled, when
you

you do but think of *Christ*, and fire your hearts, and so bring them forth as a flaming sacrifice to welcome him. Let *fear* make her obedience, and with humble reverence and lowliest veneration bow the knee of the soul to Zions King. Let *joy* be triumphant when you meditate on *Christ*. And call upon the daughters of Musick to praise and celebrate his excellency. Let *desire* be upon the wing, and spread the hands, and open the mouth wide, and pant for him. Let the most lively and pregnant *hope* sit by the way and look for him, and wait for his coming. And get up in every Ordinance like *Zacchens* on the *Sycamore-tree* that he might see Jesus as he passeth by; and big with earnest expectation of enjoying him. In a word, you must see to it that *Christ* be *chief* in your affections; That he be your *chief desire*; Your *chief joy*: And this will evidence you to be his: and without this all is unsound.

Fourthly, Let the *Butt* of all your Actions be no other but *Christ*. Whatsoever you do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here take your aim. Here let all your designs meet. Hither let all your motions tend. That *Christ* may be magnified in you, *Phil. 1. 20*. This is a mark undeniable. But he that hath more eye to the pleasing of men, his own advantage, or any worldly good, than to the pleasing and honouring of *Christ*, is no better than a Hypocrite.

I must do as much as I can in a little time, tis time now to close. I have given you together

gether in these four heads the highest duties and surest characters of every true believer. I must add nothing farther, but onely to send my prayers after my papers, and to let you know the Lords prison is not without his presence, and most refreshing influence. And that your prisoner is yours

in all Bonds

Joseph Alleine.

To



*To the most endearing and be-
loved people, the servants of
Christ in Taunton, Salva-
tion.*

Most loving and best beloved,

YOUR late most affectionate lines are now in my hands, your hearts cannot but be a most grateful and welcome present to me, I return you mine, not willingly, but thankfully, rejoycing to be yours; while the Lord will your preacher; and while the Lord will your prisoner; still yours. I acknowledge I am not my own. If I have any interest in heaven, it is yours, to be improved for you. If I have any talents of goods they are confessedly yours, your claim, your stock. *By the grace of God I am what I am.* I have nothing, but what I have received from above; and I have received for your use. I love to think how much I am yours. Make your claim with freedom; nothing can please me more. My strength is yours; my labor,
my

my liberty, my losses yours : *Ultimately* Christs, but nextly yours. I accept with all thankfullness your manifold respects. May whatever honour you put on me reflect upon Christ, whose I am, and whom I serve. He is all, and therefore I must needs be nothing. Let no man set me above my place. I am too to selfish (to my shame and grief I acknowledge it; may your prayers be the cure of it) yet surely, I should chuse to be lower, so Christ might sit the higher in all your hearts, I am onely the friend of the Bridegroom. My soul rejoyceth to hear how fast you stand, how close you cleave to him; my Joy is now fullfilled. *What greater joy to the friend of the Bridegroom, than to hear the Bridegrooms voyce,* how sweetly he converses with his Bride, and she with him, and to see the sweet passages of love between them, when he hath been a means to bring them together? This is my joy, it refreshes me; I am full of consolation, to hear how tender he is of you; to see him spreading the skirts of his love, the wing of his power and care over you. Happy thou! *Who is like unto thee O people? A people saved of the Lord, the shield of thy strength, the sword of thine excellency.* My dearly beloved, let the name of Jesus be more sweet and precious than ever to you. Verily, I am but his spokesman. Forget me, neglect me, any thing if you will but love him, and adore him, and admire him the more. I rejoyce, as to hear the sweet voice of the Bridegroom

to you, so to hear of your love and fidelity to him. Surely, the Lord hath a singular blessing for you. Ah poor and despised flock, the Butt of humane malice, the eye-sore of thy potent enemies! *The Archers have shot sorely at thee, the Hunters have made thee the deere of the Chase, singled from the rest of the Herd, and design'd for the Game, for the prey of the Hungry pursuers, quick upon the scent, following upon the scent, with full cry; and yet the beloved of the Lord dwelleth in safety by him, He, He covereth thee all the day long: thou dwellest between his shoulders.* O people of desires, hear the Herauld of God: (glorious office! Lord how unworthy am I of this strange grace, who am not worthy to stoop down and unloose the latchet of thy shoes!) yet here me as an officer of God; unto you O people, it is commanded that you *kiss the Son*. That you fall down and worship, not the humane Idol, but him whom Jehovah hath set up, and sworn that *every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to him*, or be cast into the burning fiery furnace of his tormenting wrath, seventimes hotter, yea seventy times seven than *Nebuchadnezzars* was. Unto you it is commanded that you receive his mark in your foreheads, by open and bold profession; in your hands, your right hands by suitable works, in a holy diligent, active conversation; above all in your hearts, there he must be set as a seal (as well as write upon the palms of your hands) by most vehement fervent affection.

fection. Let every one of your hearts be all on fire with strongest burning love to the name of Jesus, and offered as a flaming sacrifice to him.

Beloved, I am affraid almost to tell you what Christ looks for from you. I think of his mercies to you with fear and great joy. Know my beloved, and remember, that he Looks for great things from you; you have received much, and God will require much. I beseech you be not as other people. *My month is open to you, my heart is enlarged,* but my time is very streight. Sleep hath departed from my eyes to write a few lines unto you: but I am upon your service when you know it not; yet I cannot end, without telling you that you had need look to it, that you be in all things more than ordinary, because the Lord looks for extraordinary proficiency from you.

Brethren let your hearts be entire with God; be abundant in secret Duties, Prayer, Meditation, Self-examination, Watchfulness, Self-denial. Let none of you be another thing in your Families or Closets, from what he is in the Assembly, and the open profession that he makes. Look to the heart-work, See that you be truly, thorowly and unreservedly the Lords. Beware lest with any of you a secret root of Hypocrisie, should spoil a forward and goodly profession. Care above all things in the world, to approve your hearts to the piercing eye of the jealous God.

Let your good works shine before men, but reckon your selves to be no more, than what you are in secret. Maintain a holy jealousie of your selves, till upon much prayer, and tryal, and self-observation, you have found out by Scripture-marks the certainty of your state. But I intrench on other things to wade thus far. To my keeper I commend you, and with dearest loves to you all in the Bowels of our Lord, I remain

Your Ambassador in Bonds.

Joseph Alleine.

My dear father and brother *Norman* remembers you tenderly, desiring you to hold fast what you have received and heard, and that you be holy, harmless, exemplary, and without offence in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

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A

Practical *CASE* on

Phil. 3. 13, 14.

This ONE thing I do, I press toward the Mark.

Q. How may we come to make Religion our business?

Rule. i. You must thoroughly acquaint your selves with the rule and the compass that Religion steers by. Unless the Mariner know every point of his Compass, he is like to make but foul work of it. The word is a believers Compass, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to This rule, &c.* A believer walks by Rule, and by this Rule, the Rule of the word; you can never mannage the business of Religion, except you do thoroughly know, and often eye your Rule, and put the rule to your work. How can you trade religiously unless you know the Rules you are to deal by? Or pray rightly, if ignorant of the Rules you are to pray by? Beloved,

the commandement is exceeding broad, and prescribes you Rules for your whole Man, and for the right behaving of your selves in every part of your conversation; Oh hide the word in your hearts! lay up the Rules you are to work by; and the Rules that you are to give by; the Rules that you are to speak by; and the Rules that you are to hear by; and the Rules that you are to examine your selves by: Be sure there be no part of your conversation, but that you have some Rules that you doe set to your selves about it.

How can you carry your selves Religiously in your Relations, unless you doe conscientiously observe the Rules that you are to carry your selves by? If wives do not know their Rules, and husbands their Rules, and servants their Rules, and children their Rules, how can you bring your profession to any thing? beloved as ever you would make any thing of Religion, know the Rules of your places, set it down with your selves, you husbands, you wives, you children, you servants; these be the Rules that I will walk by, and wherein I fail of these Rules I will see my errour, and study to come up to what is lacking.

Resp. 2. You must have the whole lump of the heart leavened and seasoned with Religion, *Matth. 13. 33. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven which a woman hid, &c.* The word is this leaven, The heart is this lump in which this leaven is hid: now when

when the whole lump is thoroughly seasoned, then there will be such a suitableness between the heart and the work, that Religion will become a pleasure. A true Christian hath the law of the Spirit of Life within him, he hath a transcript of the word in his soul. Now where the law of Religion is in the heart, there will be a love of, delight in, and propensity to the work of Religion, *Rom. 8. 2. Heb. 8. 10. I delight to doe thy will, thy law is within my heart, Psal. 40. 8. who naturally careth for your state, Phil. 2. 20.* where Religion hath taken deep root in the heart, the concerns of Christ will become its natural care. Now that which is natural is delightful, and when a man loves his work, he will be much in it. Again, that which is natural is constant, so that when the heart is naturalized and habituated to Religion, the man will constantly follow it. To a heart thoroughly sanctified, Religion is the very Element it lives in, whereas a carnal heart in holy exercises is like a fish out of the water, it cannot away with the strictness of a holy self-denying life, when the heart is renewed, and made spiritual, it will naturally mind the things of the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 5. Joh. 3. 6.*

Rule. 3. You must have these six Principles inwrought and deeply engraven into your souls.

Prin. 1. That Religion is the very end of your being, that you were made and maintained for. This is the end and use of all your powers and faculties, That you may serve

and glorifie the God that made you, He made you for himself, *Prov. 16. 4. For his pleasure you are and were created, Rev. 4. 11.* Oh man look upon thy self; think whence thou art, and for what a little while since thou wast not, how camest thou to be? hath not the hand of God framed thee? Think with thy self, wherefore serve all these powers and faculties? To what end were they given me? what to eat, and drink, and sleep, and sport? If I had been a brute, I could have done this, why should it repent the Lord that he hath made me a man, that he hath given me an understanding soul? wherefore have I reason above the rest of the Creatures? but that I should understand the Law of my Creation, and the end of my being, and know my makers ends, and doe his pleasure? Better I had never been born, than not to answer my end. Better I had been a Brute, than a Man, unless I glorifie God with my understanding and imploy my powers and faculties in his service.

Oh let these thoughts live dayly upon your hearts, fix it upon your selves that you are of nouse nor worth in the world, except you serve your makers ends: that he is the Potter, and you the Clay; and that you are good for nothing, except you are for the use of him that formed you: think with your selves; Is it not pittie so excellent a peice of Gods workmanship, as man is, should be all in vain? That God should lay out so much of his power and wisdom, and grace upon thee, and loose

loose his end at last ? That he should furnish Man compleatly for the end he was made for, and send him into the world to dispatch his business, and Man should forget his errand, and neglect the very end of his being ?

Beloved, the reason why men do mind Religion no more, is because they do mistake their business. And is it not pittie, that when Man only of all the visible Creatures hath an understanding to know his end, he onely should mistake and miss his end ?

Prin. 2. That look as you do mannage the business of Religion, so are you made or marred to all Eternity, settle it upon your hearts, that if this business doth miscarry, you are undone for evermore ; you may miscarry in any other business, and yet doe well enough at last ; your goods may be wreck'd, your friends disingaged, your times spilt, and yet you may be happy ; but if you do not go through with the business of Religion you are undone men. This made *Paul* to ply the Oars, and follow it with such dilligence, *1 Cor. 9. 26, 27. So run I, so fight I, &c.* This made him engage with might and main, and put forth every limbin the race, because his Eternal undoing lay upon it: He runs through fire and water, he doth not beat the Air, and brandish his sword like a vapouring coward ; he is not like the Fencers that strike as if they could kill each other at every blow, but mean one another no hurt : no, he is earnest, he fights as for the precious Life, least otherwise after all his Preaching and paines
he

he should prove a Castaway, 1 Cor. 9. 27. Sirs, you had need look how you doe carry it now, Immortallity, Eternity hangs upon it, your patient continuance in well doing, will bring forth Eternal life; but you miss all, if you doe not keep doing, and doing well, and patiently continue so doing; If you come short of this, your portion is indignation and wrath.

Sirs, consider where you are, and look about you. Oh you careless sinners, you remiss and Luke-warm Christians, consider what is before you. The furnace is ready heat for you, if you go not through with your work. The Crown is ready prepared, if you hold out in your race; you are speeding on to Eternity, as fast as the wings of time can carry you; and that is more swiftly, than the Eagle flying in the Air.

Believe it, Religion is no trifling matter. If thou be careless and idle, and remiss here, thou art a damned Man. If a Man be upon trial for his Life, I warrant you will find him serious here. If a man have a business that will prove his utter ruine, if it miscarry, depending; be sure he will stretch his wits, and engage his interest, and turn every stone. Beloved the reason why Religion is minded with so little care, is because Men do not consider the consequence of Religion. Sirs, can you dye, can you burn? If not, take heed of trifling in Religion, and selling Heaven for want of a little Pains-taking. Oh where ever you be unserious, be sure you be

be serious and in earnest in the business of Religion, and that you may be so, let this ever dwell upon your hearts, that halving and trifling will undo all.

Prin. 3. That nothing is well done except it be Religiously done. *Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31. Col. 3. 17.* Remember, that the rules of Religion do not onely reach your praying, hearing, almesgiving, &c. but your eating, drinking, trading, marrying. You must not think to put off God with an hour in the morning, and an hour in the evening; you must be serving him throughout the day, managing your callings, visits, discourses, according to his rules. Count that arrow lost, that is not levelled at some Religious end; that hour lost that is not spent Religiously, that visit lost, in which you have not promoted the ends of Religion in your selves and friends. Count that you eat amiss, unless you eat Religiously. So much of Religion as there is in your actions, so much there is of true gold, so much as there is of self and carnal ends, so much embasing mettle is mingled therewith; your lying down, and rising up must be managed Religiously, or else they are not well managed; and you must impose it upon your selves, to be serving God not onely on your knees, but in your shops, at your Tables, in your journeys, that God may

may be glorified by you in all things.

Prin. 4. That the Trade of Religion of all others, yields the sweetest pleasure, and surest gain. A true Christian is a Merchant Man that dealeth in no small matters, but for goodly Pearls, *Mat. 13. 45.* A holy Life is a spiritual trading, *Mat. 25. 16.* Now there is no Trade to this. A Believer Trades for Grace and Glóry: Oh how glorious is the prize, and how excellent and unvalluable is the income of Religion! *Wisdom is more precious than Rubies, all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared to her,* Read *Prov. 8. 11.* & *Prov. 3.* to the 19. They that come from the *Indies* laden with Gold and Spices, with Pearls and Diamonds, have but a poor Trade in comparison of a Christian: follow the work of Religion to purpose, and you will find the true Riches flowing in upon you; your faith will grow exceedingly, and your love will abound, and as riches increase, your hearts will be set upon them, and your gaires will increase your diligence. Every man will be dealing in that commodity, that yields great profit. The reason why Men have so little heart for Religion is because they have secretly an oppinion that there is little to be got by it. They reckon an hour spent in Religion, to be an hour lost. They say in their hearts. *It is in vain to serve God,* *Mal. 3. 14.* *And what profit should we have if we pray to him?* *Job 21. 15.* But when a man tastes the pleasure, and finds the gain of Religion, then he will set to it to purpose, and

and like the wise Merchant imploy all his stock here, *Mat. 13. 44, 46.*

Beloved, as ever you would go through with the work of Religion, you must have your hearts thoroughly possessed with the advantage and profit that comes in by Religion. when a man doth think he can benefit himself more other where, he will have little heart to follow after Christ, but when he knows not where to be better, then he will stick resolutely to him, *Ioh. 6. 66, 67, 68.* There are two great Pillars upon which Religion stands; The one is a belief that God is, and the other *that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11. 6.* Well let this dwell upon you then, that you cannot better your state, nor promote your happiness any way in all the world, so much as by Religion. No pleasure, nor profit to that of Religion, *Riches and honour are with her, all her ways are pleasantness, she is a tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is he that retaineth her, Prov. 3. 17, 18.* Here is true delight, *Psal. 40. 8. Rom. 7. 22.* Here is meat and drink, *Iohn 4. 34.* work and wages, *Psal. 19. 11.*

Pr. 5. That your time is short, and your work great, and must be done now or never. Our Saviour made Religion his business, *Luke 2. 49.* And Oh how busie was he! *He went up and down doing good;* and so much was he taken up with his work, that he had not time to take his bread; yea his carnal friends,
 seeing

seeing how earnest he was, said he was besides himself, and began to lay hold on him, *Act. 10. 38. Mark 3. 20, 21.* And what did put him upon this earnest diligence? The sense of the shortness of his time, *Iah. 9. 4.* Oh Sirs remember with him, that now you have a day to work in, and you have but a day, and the night is hasting upon you, when there is no work to be done: no more praying, no more hearing, no more exhorting, nor admonishing. Now serve your generation, now exhort one another dayly; doe good with your Estates; call upon your friends dayly, for it must be now or never, let it ever dwell upon you, *That there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou art going,* and that will put you upon doing the work of Religion with all your might. Be convinced of the weight of your work, and that will make you answer intervening disturbance that would take you off, as *Nehemiah* did, *Chap. 6. 3.* Then remember of what dreadfull consequence tis, your salvation is at stake, and therefore you must work it out with fear and trembling.

Prin. 6. That except you make it your business, all your Religion is in vain. While you halt and halve it in Religion, you come but half way to heaven. Settle it upon your hearts, that except you are throughout Religious, you are Religious to no purpose. Be sure you shall never come to heaven except

cept you seek it in Gods order, *Mat. 6. 33.* *First seek,* &c. It were not suitable to the wisdom of God, so to undervalue his Christ and glory, as to throw them away on those that account other matters better worth their pains and care.

Rule. 4. You must have the love of God and Religion, lying next your hearts; Love is a busie Grace, *1 Thes. 1. 3.* *Your labour of Love.* We may say of Love, as *Solomon* of the vertuous woman, she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff, she eateth not the bread of idleness, she worketh willingly with her hands, *Prov. 31.* Love will constrain you, and put you upon a willing and dilligent keeping Gods commandements, *2 Cor. 5. 14.* *1 Ioh. 5. 3.* Get your hearts in love with the Laws and Waies of God: who more busie than *David*? Morning, evening, and noon, he was praying and praising, yea talking and thinking of God and his ways, all the day, and all from his love to them, *Psal. 55. 17.* & *119. 147.* & *118.* & *71. 24.* *Oh how I love thy Law! Psal. 119. 97.* *Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house, Psal. 26. 8.*

You must beware of taking too much of the world into your hands. When a mans heart and head is full as it can hold of worldly care and busineses, and he cannot tell which way to turn himself, in a crowd and throng of worldly affairs, how can the care of Religion live in such a ones heart? *Luke 10. 41, 42.* If *Martha* will trouble her self about many things

things, the *ONE THING* needfull shall be neglected. You must buy, and marry, and weep, and rejoyce, and trade, and care for these things, as if you did it not; not laying too much stresse upon these things, nor engaging too eagerly in seeking after them, or else you will neglect the better things, and learn to pray, and hear, and read, as if you did it not, *1 Cor. 7. 30.* Tis true that the work of your callings is part of your business for Heaven; but then you must be sure to keep your affairs so at command, as that you may have so much room for dayly Prayer and Meditation, and self-reflection, as may season your worldly business with Religion, and sanctifie it to you, that it may become a help, and not a snare.

Rule 6. You must alwaies work as under your Masters eye. When the Masters eye is known to look on, there is as much work done in an hour, as many times is done in two, when the sense of his oversight doth not quicken the workman, *Psal. 16. 8. I have set the Lord alwaies before me.*

Rule 7. You must ever carry your eye upon your mark. So did *Paul* in the text, *I press towards the Mark, for the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ,* The mark that a Believer ayms at, is Gods Glory, and his own, that God may be glorified in him, and he with God. This glorious prize will animate you to your work, and swallow up the sense of labour and difficulty, and make you for the joy set before you, to endure the
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Cross, and despise the shame, Heb. 12. 2. Paul carried the Crown incorruptible in his eye, and that made him with patience invincible to run, and fight, and keep under his body, *1 Cor. 9. 25, 26, 27.* All the afflictions, and reproaches that attended Gods poor people and wayes, in the time of their thralldom, could not discourage *Moses*, when he eyed the recompence of reward, *Heb. 11. 25. 26.* Keep heaven in sight, and your work will go on with pleasure, and all your difficulties will seem light and easie, and not worthy once to enter into comparison with the expected bliss, *2 Cor. 4. 17. 18. Rom. 8. 18.*

Rule 8. You must at the entrance of every action, remember the Rules that you are to act by. Else in vain doe you receive and lay up Rules, if when occasion is, you doe not apply them to the particular Case. To what purpose have you rules for prayer, if you do not remember and use them when you come to prayer? To what purpose have you rules to examine your selves by, if you do not observe them in examining your selves accordingly? As ever you desire to make any thing of your Religion, remember when you come to your tables, the rules that you are to eat by; when you go to your callings, make visits, read, or hear the word, be sure you think on the rules that you are to read by, or discourse by, or hear by, &c. You cannot think of God in every motion, but with a little pains, watchfullness, and prayer, you
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may come to this, to mind your rule and your end at the entrance of every solemn action. And this I desire you to enjoyn upon yourselves, and take a daily account of your selves, how tis performed. This would be indeed to keep up the power of Christianity. Oh be at the pains to put to this, and you will know what it is to walk with God, and to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, and will have learnt that happy Lesson, To walk up and down in the name of the Lord, *Prov. 23. 17. Zech. 10. 12.*

Rule 9. Be sure every morning to set out to a right point of the Compass. If a Man takes a wrong turning and misleth his way at setting forth, he goes miserably out, it may be, a great part of the day, cut out your business in the morning, and let your aym be well; Set the hand of your watch to a right point, and wind it up carefully, and that will be a means to keep it right throughout the day. Never rise from your beds but with some such thoughts as these. I will set forth this day in the name of God. Religion shall be my business this day. I will surely spend this day for Eternity. *David* would begin with God, *Psal. 139. vii. 18. & 5. 3.*

Rule 10. Let the present days practice be still the mending of the past daies errors. If you would go through with the work of Religion, you must take this course. Every evening strictly to examine your selves about your whole carriage that day with reference

to your Duties, Sins, Hearts, Tongues, Tables, Callings, as I have elsewhere directed you; and when you find your selves tardy in any thing this day, be sure to amend it the next day. Was the Appetite too much indulged? when you sit at meat the next day remember the error, and hold the reins faster then. Do you find that you were not heavenly in your discourse? be sure that you be not caught in the same fault again the next day. Have you let loose your Passions, or given your tongues the reins? be humbled, and be sure that you be not caught again the next day in the same fault; else to what purpose are all your self-examinations? *Psal. 119. 59.* In vain doe we think on our waies, except we turn our feet to Gods Testimonies.

Rule 11. You must deny your selves, and keep under your carnal lusts and affections. Where self bears the sway, that will set you on work, and you shall have enough to doe to follow its carnal designs. If you suffer your lusts and carnal affections to command you, to be sure they will find you work enough, you then will have little room, and little leisure, but these will be all the day long calling upon you to gratifie. One while the appetite will be calling, and there must be time to give to that what it craves, another while revenge will be calling, and employing you to contrive how to vent it, and give it satisfaction; another while pride will set you on work to satisfie that: and then lust will

be calling that you must gratifie; and then covetousness will be chiding that you have neglected it, and be putting you on satisfying that. Thus your lusts will find you business night and day; and your employment will be to make *provision for the flesh*, Rom. 13.

14. Get these therefore under, or else the business of Religion will never, can never go on.

Psal. 144.

Psalm 144. 3.

Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him?

THe Psalmist in the foregoing words, had eminently set forth the strange goodness and Grace of God towards him, upon which he breaks out into admiration of him, that ever God should look upon him. *What is man, &c.*

Hence observe,

Doct. That it is a wonder above all wonders, that ever the great God should make such account of such a thing as man.

This I shall open to you in these three generals.

1. *It will appear if you consider what a great God the Lord is.*

2. *What a poor thing Man is.*

3. *What a great account the great God hath of this poor thing Man.*

First, *If you consider what a great God the Lord is.* And here I may be confounded, to think that I can speak no more of his greatness. When I am studying to speak to you

of his greatness. that comes to my mind, *canst thou by searching find out God?* Alas, we may all complain as *Jobs* friends did, *Job 8. 9. We are but of yesterday and know nothing,* yet notwithstanding, though we are not able to comprehend, much less to expresse the greatness of God; yet some thing we may see, and accordingly should conceive of it, and should labour to set it out to others.

It is seen in his Works, and Word.

1. *In his Works.* Herein God doth discover to us his wonderful greatness, *Job 36. 24. 25. Remember that thou Magnifie his work which men behold. Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off.* Man may see afar off if he do but cast his eye as he runs, what a great God that is that made all the world. If we doe but cast our eyes upon the Fabrick of the world that he hath made; if we look down-ward, and see how every creature serveth its end that it was made for: if we see how the earth hangs upon nothing; if we are in our wits what should we do but praise whatever we are doing? whether plowing, or eating, &c. this Hymn is to be sung to him, *It was he that gave me strength to work, and appetite to eat, Psal. 119. 1, 2. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work: day unto day uttereth speech, &c.* Every day doth preach to us this Doctrine, what a great, wise, good, glorious God he is, who doth order every season, and their occurrences, *Rom. 1. 20. Dost thou find thy heart begin to be lifted up*

up with pride? Dost thou begin to forget thy maker? Do but behold his Works; see if thou canst do any such thing: say, *let there be light*, and see whether there will be light. Try whether thou canst bring forth such a thing as this. This doth God demand of *Iob*. Chap. 38. But if man cannot come near any of these works of God, then let him adore his power and greatness, and subject himself to him.

2. *In his word*. What glorious descriptions doe we find made of him in the Scriptures? *Psal.* 104. 1. *O Lord thou art very great*, &c. *Iob.* 25. 4, 5, 6. Man, in comparison of God, is but a worm, a vile worm, as the word signifies; such a thing is man. A worm that is bred in flesh, which is the worst of all. Now is it not a wonder of all wonders that God should look upon such a one as man? That God that humbles himself to behold the things that are done in heaven, that this great God should look upon us? or take any pleasure or delight in us? O how should we admire this Grace!

Secondly. *If you consider what man is*. What a *Vain*, what a *Vile* thing he is.

1. What a *vain* thing he is. His vanity appears,

1. By Gods testimony of him. 2. By mans own hand subscribing to it.

(1.) By Gods testimony of him, *Isa.* 40. 15, 16, 17. *All nations before him are as vanity. They are as the drop of a bucket, and as the small dust of the ballance*, &c.

(2) You shall see *mans own hand subscribing to it*. If you will but look into other places of Scripture, you shall see man setting his own hand to it, *Psal. 39. 11. Surely, every man is vanity, mark, every man*. Men of all Ranks and conditions, *Psal. 62. 9. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye: to be laid in the ballance, they are altogether lighter than vanity*. The Psalmist doth not speak it rashly, but as one that had tryal of what man was; and yet he gives this as the result of his experience and tryal, that if man were put into one ballance, and vanity in the other, it would weigh him down. So *Psal. 39. 5. Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity: Not vain, but vanity it self: yea every, yea altogether, yea at his best state, he is altogether vanity. Job 11. 11. For he knoweth vain men*. That is the proper Epethite that belongs to man. Man is a *vain thing*, and that in two particulars. He is *Worthless*, and *Useless*.

1. *He is a worthless thing, Job 11. 12. For vain man would be wise*. In the original 'tis *Empty man*. Man is by Nature *empty* of every good thing. So the Apostle, *in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing*. There is nothing that is spiritually good left; all is lost by mans Apostacy from God. Yea, man is not onely nothing worth, but worse than nothing. We use to say that a man that is over head and ears in debt, is many thousands (it may be) worse than nothing: so is man, he is infinitely in his makers debt, and cannot
come

come out, as we acknowledge in that petition *forgive our debts*; where we acknowledge two things. (1) *That we are in debt to God.* (2) *That we cannot pay him.* This is the condition of man, he is infinitely in God's debt, & he cannot pay any thing: he hath nothing to pay.

2. *He is a useless thing.* Able to doe the Lord no service, *Eph. 2. 1.* Yea when he is recovered by grace, 'tis very poor service, that he can doe for his maker. And therefore our Saviour teacheth his disciples to say they are unprofitable servants when they have done their duty. Yea we are so far from doing him any acceptable service, that we cannot but sin against him, and offend him. Now put these things together, and doth it not appear to be a wonder that God should make such account of man? Is he a vain thing, Worthless and Useless, and yet will God set his heart upon him? what a wonder is this!

2. *Man is a vile thing.* If he were onely empty of good, this were something; but now he is not onely empty of all that is good, but he is full of all that is displeasing to God, *Job 15. ver. 16. Man drinketh in iniquity like water.* This is the condition of man, he drinketh in sin as the fish drinks in water: Sin is his proper Element. The filthy carcase lying before us is not more loathsome to us than we are to God in our sins. Man, before God in himself is like a carcase lying in its crawling worms. Now is it not strange that so vain, yea, so vile a thing as man should

have any room in Gods heart? How should we cry out with the *Pſamist* here in the text, *Lord what is man, &c.*

Thirdly. This will appear by considering *What great account this great God hath of this poor thing man.*

What great account God hath of him, will appear (1) In what he hath laid out upon him. (2) In what he hath laid up for him. (3) By the near union he hath taken him into, with himself. (4.) By his near relation to him. (5) By his entertaining such familiar communion with man.

First. If you consider what God hath laid out upon him. The care, and the cost.

1. The care. Ah brethren, this is strange grace, that the infinite God should lay out his care, his thoughts upon such a thing as man is; yet thus he doth, *1 Pet. 5. 7. For he careth for you.* Now this will appear worthy of your admiration, if you consider what this care is. 'Tis a *Paternal* care, a *Personal* care; a *Perpetual* care.

1. It is a *Paternal* care. A *Fatherly* care. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. So *Mal. 3. 17.* God calls them his *Jewels*. Now if a mans house be on fire, he will be sure to save his Jewels. But if a mans children be in the house, he will rather loose his Jewels than his children. And if he saveth any Child, then that that is the dutifull child. So God will spare them as a son that serveth him.

Now this *Paternal* care is, upon that account,

count, *Natural, Constant, Vigorous.*

(1) *It is a natural care which is in fathers,* and this is in God. This the *Apostle* commend-
ed *Timothy* for, *Phil. 2. 20. That he natu-*
rally cared for their state. That which is na-
tural is delightful: so is Gods care of his
people; he takes pleasure in it, in his pro-
jects and designs to bring his people to glory.
Yea God is so Ambitious (as we may so
speak,) that he is angry when we will not cast
our cares upon him. He would have us be
carefull for nothing.

(2) Upon this account, *it is also constant*
and uninterrupted. That which is Natural is
constant. As the fire doth naturally give heat,
therefore it alwaies doth so. But that which
is contrary to Nature is quickly gone: As if
you heat water over the fire, the heat is
quickly gone again; because it is against na-
ture. Now Gods care is Natural, and there-
fore Constant.

(3) That which is Natural is *vigorous.*
That which is done against Nature is done
slowly. As when you cast a stone upward.
Now Gods care is a *Natural* care, and there-
fore a *vigorous* care.

2. *It is a Personal care.* God will look to
us himself, *Isa. 66. 2.* It is true God doth
put others to look to us, but he will not
trust us with these, but he will look to us
himself.

3. *It is a perpetual care.* As when *Daniel*
was to be cast into the Lions Den, *Dan. 6. 14.*
The king set his heart upon Daniel to deliver
him,

him, &c. So Gods heart is set upon us. He is bent for our good, he is still designing for us, *Psal. 40. 5. Many O Lord* --- are thy thoughts to us ward, &c.

2. As it appears by the care, so by the cost that God hath laid out upon man. (1) The Riches of his love. (2) The gold of his grace.

1. The riches of his love. The free grace, favour and love of God is called *Riches* in Scripture, *Ephes. 1. 7.* The Apostle speaking of the *Riches* of Christ shews how unsearchable they are, *Ephes. 3. 8.* So *Rom. 11. 33.* O the depth of the *Riches* both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Now all these were laid out to determine mans deliverance. They are glorious Riches that God doth lay out upon his sons and servants, *Rom. 2. 7.* And well may these be called *Riches*. There must be two things to make Riches, there must be (1) *Plenty*. (2) *Preciousness*.

First. There must be *Plenty*. For a little of never so good, will never make a man Rich.

Secondly, There must be *Preciousness*, for abundance of that which is worthless will never make a man Rich. Now both of these are in Gods Mercy, there is plenty, and 'tis precious. The Mercy and Grace of God is very precious. David sought most for this, when others set their hearts upon other things, *Psal. 4.* And as 'tis of great worth, so 'tis of great plenty. It is abundance of grace that God doth put forth in repairing mans Nature, and making him a New Creature.

But

But this great cost of God upon us will further appear, in that he hath laid out upon us. (1) *His Creatures.* (2) *His Christ.*

1. *His Creatures upon us.* That he should lay out all these Creatures upon us, These Heavens, and this Earth to be for the comfort of man, Oh how doth this discover Gods goodness to man! This made *David* admire him, *Psal.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. Here you may see what an account God doth make of man, in that he should make him a little god among the Creatures; that their sheaf should bow to his sheaf; that they must spend and be spent for man: yea, the invisible Creatures, the Angels, they must be ministring spirits, for them who are the heirs of Salvation, *Heb.*

1. *Heb.* 1. 14. 2. *In that he hath laid out his Christ upon us.* This was a costly gift indeed. It is much that God should give his Creatures to dye for us, to give us food: but oh that he should give us his *Christ* to dye for us, Oh how incredibly hath the Lord advanced man in this! In this he hath abundantly shewed how man was esteemed by him. This shews that he had a great regard to us. We were redeemed by the blood of Christ, which was the blood of God himself, *Act.* 20. 28. Now is it not an admirable thing, that so mean a purchase should be made with so great a price? This was that which God did commend his strange love with, (*1 Job.* 3. 16.) that he laid down his life for us. Look into thy self man, what hast thou that thou shouldest have this great

great purchase to be laid out for thee? Oh How should man be continually in the praise of God!

2. In the gold of his grace, that God hath laid out upon man. Grace is call'd the true Riches, and this hath been laid out upon man, Rev. 3. 18. It is called gold, yea 'tis much more precious than gold. When you see the Queen attired in Gold, Psal. 45. all this is to set forth the Grace that is upon the Saints of God. I tell thee Christian, thou that hast but one dram of Grace, he hath given thee more than if he had given thee a whole world. In the Creation there were some footsteps of God upon other Creatures; but upon man there was his Image. And now that God should distinguish thee from others by one dram of Grace, this is admirable!

Secondly, It appears what great account this great God hath of this poor thing, Man, in what he hath laid up for him. This makes the Psalmist to cry out as one overcome with admiration, Psal. 31. 19. O How great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! It is much that God hath laid out for us, but more that he hath laid up for us. The Psalmist could not express it, he could but admire it onely, 1 Cor. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Eye hath not seen. The eye of man hath seen much; especially those that have travailed in other

Coun-

Countries. But the eye of man hath not seen any thing that may be compared with this that God hath prepared. Nor ear heard. We have heard of more than we have seen; We have heard of gold Mines and the like, that are in other parts of the world; but the ear hath not heard of any thing like this. And though the eye hath seen much, and the ear hath heard more; yet the heart of man can conceive of more again; yet *the heart of man cannot conceive* of what God hath laid up for them that love him. *Now lay these two together, what God hath laid out upon man, and what he hath laid up for him, and will it not appear that the great God makes a great account of man? How can you chuse but cry out in the words of the Psalmist, What is man, &c.* But, *Thirdly.* This will appear by *that near union that he hath taken him up into, with himself.* Oh how wonderfully hath God dignified man in this? By uniting his Nature to the nature of man, as it is in the second person of the Trinity, *Joh. 1. 14. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, or, in us.* That God should take up the nature of man into personal union with himself, what an unspeakable dignity is this! So the Apostle, *he took not upon him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham, Heb. 2. 16.* Herein is man dignified above the Angels of glory, in the near union between God and man in the Godhead. This is that which the Angels do desire to pry into: well may the Apostle say,

great

great is the mystery of godliness: and this is the top of it, God manifest in the flesh. Greatly hath God dignified man in these two things, that Man should be partaker of the Divine Nature; and that God should partake of the Humane Nature.

1. *That Man should partake of the Divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4.* Oh this is a great privilege that we should bear the Image of God. Let the world scorn at holiness; yet I tell thee, Man, that hath one dram of grace, he hath done more for thee, than he hath done for all the world. How ever this is out of fashion in world, I am sure 'tis not in heaven. O glory in this, you that are made partakers of Gods Nature.

2. *In his taking upon him our Humane Nature.* In this, mans Nature is more exalted yet. The Nature of Man in Christ is lifted up far above all Principalities and Powers, 1 Pet. 3. ult. *Angels, and Authorities, and Powers being made subject unto him.* This is spoken of Christ, not onely in his Divine Nature, but his Humane Nature, for his Divine Nature was there before: therefore it must be understood of his Humane Nature. And he hath all power of Angels and Authorities, and he sends them forth to Minister at his peoples need, Heb. 1. ult, Ephes. 1, 20, 21, 22. *Which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all Principality, and power, and might, and dominion: And hath put all things under his feet, and*
gave

gave him to be head over all things to the Church. Mark, the Man Jesus Christ is head and Lord over all things: for it is spoken of Christ as to his Humane Nature (as I told you before) for 'tis spoken of him as raised from the dead, which was his Humane Nature. So that you see how wonderfully mans Nature is exalted in Christ.

Fourthly. *It appears by his near Relation to him.* This is another way by which God hath signified what a great account he hath of man, that he will take him near to himself. You know 'tis a great honour to be next to the King. Now what a great honour is it for a man to be next to God? now he hath taken man near to him. (1) *As a husband.* (2) *As a father.* (3) *As a friend.*

1. *As a Husband.* *They twain shall be one flesh.* God hath owned man in this Relation, *Isa. 54. 5. Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name.* O what a thing is this that he should not be ashamed to own us in that Relation! *Jer. 3. 14. I am married unto you, Eph. 5. 30. We are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, Hos. 2. 19. I will betroth thee unto me for ever. 2 Cor. 11. 2. I have espoused you unto one husband.* O what a great exaltation is this, that we should become the bride of Christ, the wife and spouse of Christ! what honour hath the Bride, the Lambs wife! A believer is espoused to Christ: and therefore the Apostle propounds the example of Christ to his Church, unto men towards their wives, to imitate his ex-

ample, in the performance of their duties to them. Now what a wonder is this that such beggars as we are should be taken from the dunghil & be made a bride prepared for him!

2. *As a Father.* So he is nearly related to us. This is an astonishing consideration, 1 *Job. 3. 1.* O what a wonder is this, that he should take such a thing as man, so near to himself as to make him become his son! That he should take him from the dunghil of sin, From the dungeon of darkness, The family of Satan, The furnace of hell.

There be two dignities confer'd upon man here. (1) *He is taken into his family.* (2) *Admitted to sit at his Table.*

(1) *He is taken into his family, Ephes. 3. 15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.* Mark, the Lord is a great house-keeper, and all believers are his family. And though these be in different degrees and orders, some glorified in heaven, and some here on earth; yet we are all but one family; so that we are taken into the same family and household that the Saints in glory be in. And what a dignity is this! *Ephes. 2. 19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God.* We that were sometimes strangers, are now by our Adoption become of Gods household. You may think they shall not want good keeping, 1 *Tim. 5. 8. He that provides not for those of his own house, is worse than an infidel.* God will

will be sure to provide for those that be of his own house. Now we that are his children, shall thus be provided for. O how doth *David* commend their state that shall be admitted to dwell in Gods house? He prefers it above all the honour of Princes dignity, *Psal. 84.* This is our priviledge. We are in Gods house, of his family. If the Queen of *Sheba* did think the servants of *Solomon* blessed, how much more blessed are they that are the servants of *Jesus Christ*? *Happy* (said she) *are those thy servants, &c.* but how much more may this be said of Gods children.

(2) *We are admitted to sit at his Table.* God doth admit his children to his own Table. This is the childrens portion; and when he hath fed them a while at his table here, he will translate them to an upper-table in the other world, *Luk. 22. 28, 29, 30.* *Ye are they which have continued with me in my Temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my Table.* This is the priviledge of Gods children, O what a dignity is this, to sit and eat and drink with *Christ* at his Table! This is in part given us here, and shall be perfected upon us hereafter. God sayes to believers as *David* said to *Mephibosheth*, *2 Sam. 9. 7.* *I will surely shew thee kindness, &c. and thou shalt eat bread at my Table continually.* And therefore sith we are admitted to this priviledge to eat and drink at God's Table, let us do as he, and say with him, *vers. 8.* *And he bowed himself*

and said, what is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I-am? When Nathan would express the tenderness of the poor man to his lamb, he doth it by this, (2 Sam. 12. 3.) *That it did eat of his own meat, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom:* This is the priviledge that Christ vouchsafes us, to eat of his own bread, and drink of his own cup, and be as his children.

3. *The Relation of a friend.* This you know is a very familiar and loving relation. Amongst others there may be some strangeness, but this is a most familiar relation. Abraham was called the friend of God. It is the Epithite that Christ gives his Disciples, *I call you friends.* Friends, you know, do unbosome their secrets one to another. Thus it is with God and believers. The Lord opens his secrets to them; and they rip open their hearts to God. *The secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him.*

Fiftly. It appears that God makes a great account of man, *in that he doth entertain such familiar communion with man.* O how wonderfully doth God condescend to man on this account! How familiarly doth he treat with us? He doth open all his mind to us. *Job. 14. 2. In my fathers bouse are many Mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you.* Intimating that he would keep back nothing from them that would be for their good. He tells all his heart and mind to believers. And this account he gives to his father when he leaves the world; he shews his father that he had taught them, and

and opened his mind to them, *Job. 17. 6, 8, 14.* Christ doth open and reveal the fathers mind and will to believers. And as he is pleased to converse familiarly with us, so he doth let us converse with him. My Brethren it is an unspeakable dignity that God doth admit man to, in that he will speak with him. Herein *Moses* did commend the people of *Israel*, in that there was no Nation like to them, *that God should speak to them, and they speak unto God.* This is a glorious priviledge that God will speak to man; especially that he will speak to him by his Son, *Heb. 1. 1.* This is more than for God to speak to him out of the fire. This is a great condescension on Gods part, and exaltation on mans part. And then not onely that God should speak to man, but that man should speak to God. Ah brethren, this is that should make us stand amazed, that we should be admitted to speak to the great God. This did astonish *Abraham*, *Gen. 18. 27.* *Beho'd now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and Ashes.* He wondered at this great dignity that the great God should let him converse with him. That his ear should be open to us, and we should come and knock at his door, and have admission, O what a priviledge is this! what an honour is this, that we should have the honour to speak with the King, let him be in what company he will, and be carried into his bed-chamber! And yet thus it is. Oh admire this rich grace

of God, and cry out with the *Psalmist* in the text, *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man that thou makest account of him?*

Luk. 15:

Luk. 15. 23, 24.

Bring hither the fatted Calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry. For this my Son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.

MY beloved this text is so full of mercy, on Gods part, and so full of comfort for us, that methinks I may close the book, and have done as soon as I have begun: methinks the text might be a Sermon of it self. In it you have set before you the joy and triumph of heaven for the recovery of poor, dead, lost sinners.

1. *You have heavens joy and triumph for them. Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it and let us eat, and be merry.* Under this is signified the Joy that is in heaven over one returning sinner. The Angels of God, yea, the God of the Angels, do rejoyce in the conversion of one lost sinner.

2. *You have the cause of this Joy, and that was from that blessed and happy change that had passed upon this prodigal.* And there is a twofold change that we find upon him, *In his heart, and in his state.*

1. *In his Heart.* That you have in the verses above. *When he came to himself, he*

said, how many hired servants of my fathers, have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger? Here is a great change wrought upon his heart, he is now come to his senses again. An impenitent sinner is beside himself: none in the world is so distracted as he is. All the madness in the world is nothing to this. He that throws fire-brands at his head, is not in so bad a case as he that throws fire-brands at God. Well, the man is now come to his senses: and what was the effect.

(1) *He was sensible of his misery, I perish with hunger.* This is one of the first things that God doth for his people, when he brings them home, to make them sensible of their misery.

(2) *He was sensible of his sin too. Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.* Not onely misery, but the sense of sin must be set home upon the heart of a poor sinner, or else the conversion will not be true.

(3) *You have his confession and conversion: His confession, Father I have Sinned. And his conversion, he returned home to his Father,*

2. *A change in his State.* When he comes to his father, you shall see what an Alteration it made in his condition.

(1) *From Nakedness to Clothing, ver. 22. But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. He was now new clothed from top to toe: yea, not onely*

for

for necessity, but for ornament, a ring on his hand. O what a change was here! from Rags to Robes. And no other but the best Robes.

(2) *From Penury, to Plenty.* Bring hither the fatted calf. Alas! the poor starveling would have been glad but a little before, to have eat of the husks that he fed the swine with, but he could not have them. But now the fatted calf must be fetched out and killed for him.

(3) *From being lost, to be found.* He was lost, and is found.

(4) *From being dead, to be alive again.*
There are four Observations that I shall commend to you from the words.

1. *Observ.* That a Sinner in his Natural condition, is not onely diseased, but dead: not onely strayed, but lost.

2. *Obs.* That there is a possibility even for dead Sinners to be raised, for lost sinners to be recovered. Consider this you that are here, that are touched with the sense of your misery. If any souls are touched with the sense of their misery and undone condition, consider this that you may be found. It hath been thus with all the saints of God. They were dead and lost; and yet are alive and are found: and why may not you as well as they? Oh pray and use the means: Why should not you be turned too?

3. *Obs.* That it is a most glorious and blessed change that God doth work in the state of a believer

liever when he bringeth him to himself, from the state that he was in; no less than from being dead to be alive; from being lost to be found.

4. Obs. That it is matter of Heavens joy and triumph, when poor dead Sinners are revived; and lost Sinners are recovered. Bring hither the fatted calf, &c. and why so? This my son was dead and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

It is the third of these Observations that I intend to insist upon. That it is a most blessed and glorious change that God doth work in the state of a believer, &c. I shall open this in its several parts. It is a great change that God doth work.

(1) From being dead to be alive. Regeneration is not such a change as doth consist in performing such a duty, or leaving such a sin that thou could'st not well live in. It is pittiful to think, how many take the leaving of one sin to be the new birth; No, it is no less than from being dead to be alive again.

(2) It is such a change, as from being lost to be found. A sinner, in his Natural state is a lost man, in a lost condition; but when he is recovered by conversion he is found again. The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost. And so in this Luke 15. What was this lost sheep, and lost goat, and lost Son? What was the meaning of all this, but the recovering of lost Souls? So that its a great change, a coming from death to life; from being lost to be found. If our gospel be hid, 'tis hid to those

those that are lost : (that is, for the present they are lost,) but when they are converted, then, of lost they are found.

Use. Is it so blessed and glorious a change, that God doth work in the condition of a believer, when he bringeth him to himself; no less than from being dead to be alive, from being lost to be found? *Then you that are believers rejoice in, and be thankfull for that blessed and happy condition that God hath translated you into.* Ah brethren, how may you look one upon another, and consider what God hath done for you?

1. *How that you were dead, and are alive again;* You were diseased, yea dead creatures. diseased, full of all that may render you miserable: all diseases are met together in a poor sinner. Now that God hath recovered thy diseased soul, yea, thy dead soul, and brought thee to life again, Oh what matter of joy is this! How should you wonder at so great a change as this? We read that at the Miracles that our Saviour did upon the diseased, there was great astonishment among the people; they were amazed at this, but here are more miraculous cures than those; the cure of dead souls is more than the cure of dead bodies. O Brethren, if all the diseased that Christ had cured should have confer'd together, what strange stories would they have told? One would have said, I was born deaf; and he said *Ephatha*, and my ears were opened. Another I was born blind

blind and he anointed mine eyes, & I washed and received my sight. Another, I was thirty eight years under a disease, and by a word of his mouth I was healed. Another, I was eighteen years in a sad condition, and by a touch of his garment I was cured. And so of the rest. Ah brethren, you were not onely diseased, but dead; and Christ hath recovered you. O! what matter of thankfulness is here? You that are believers, should not look one upon another without wondering. What should move you to wonder if not this? It will be a strange change when we shall see all the sons of *Adam* come forth at last out of their graves; when we shall see those that were buried in the great deep, brought forth by the power of Christ; and made all appear together, this will be a strange change. But the change of dead bodies is not so great as the change of dead souls. O how should you praise *God* that hath raised you from so great a death as this! How is it that we are taken up no more with wonderment for this that he hath done for our souls? *God* doth rejoyce over it; it is heavens joy when a lost sinner is found. And doth *God* and Angels take notice of it, and rejoyce, and do you not take notice of it? O what ingratitude is this!

This should excite sinners to speed their return to *God*; for this will rejoyce heaven and earth. Shall I leave my wine (saith the Vine) whereby I make glad the heart of *God* and man? I may say truly, the recovery of a sinner makes glad the heart of *God* and man;

man; not onely will Christians and Ministers rejoyce over thee when thou turnest to God : but God himself will rejoyce over thee, when thou returnest : he will call for *the fatted Calf, &c.* O the Mirror of unthankfulness, that is upon our hearts, that we should be no more moved with any work that God hath done upon our souls ! You that are converted and wrought upon by Sanctification, one would think that you should be able to enter upon no other talk than this, to tell what God hath done for your Souls. My brethren, if while we are here together, we should see our dead friends, that have been dead ten, or twenty, or thirty years agoe, to eat and drink, and walk, and talk, and converse with us, how should we be astonished at it ? And how would they wonder one at another ? One that dyed at such a time ; and another, that dyed at such a time and here they live again, and talk again. But now here is a greater wonder than this ; here are dead souls, and they are brought together and live again, and talk again. O ! me thinks you should wonder to see one another restored from so great a death.

Obj. But you will say, how shall I know that I am recovered from death to life ?

Ans. I shall give together the Characters, and the priviledges of you that are recovered from death to life, that so your evidence and comfort may be promoted together.

And there are these four that belong to you
First. *He hath raised you from a state of*

cor-

corruption and rottenness, to a state of health, and holiness. You know a state of death is a state of corruption: the grave is a place of rottenness and putrefaction. You that lye in your old lusts still, certainly you have no portion or part in this matter. But you that are changed are brought from this state: a state of *sin*; is a state of *corruption*. The Scripture every where speaks of sin by the Metaphor that carries in it the highest pitch of filthiness, *Psal. 14. 3. They are altogether become filthy, or stinking.* And so in *Job 15. 16. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh in iniquity like water?* Man in his natural state is a most filthy creature: no comparison is sufficient to set forth the odiousness of his condition, before he is sanctified by grace; and the reason is, because he *drinketh in iniquity like water.* As the fish doth swim in, and take in water naturally: so sin is his very element wherein he doth naturally live as it were. Thus the *Apostle, Rom. 3. 13. Their throat is an open Sepulchre.* And so our Saviour compares the Pharisees to *whited Sepulchres.* But now you that are believers, God hath raised you from a state of *Rottenness* to a state of *health and holiness.* Grace is the health of the soul; Holiness is the soundness of the soul. An upright heart, is a sound heart. O beloved, what a priviledge is this to be translated from a state of corruption, to a state of holiness? O what cause have you of thankfulness, that can find the stamp of God again upon your souls?

souls? you are highly favoured indeed whom God hath priviledged with this. There is all that is desirable in grace and holiness; Riches, Wealth, beauty, all. How often do we read of the *beauty of Holiness*? And so of its *Riches* too; *I counsel thee to buy of me gold, that thou mayest be Rich, Rev. 3. 18.* 'Tis the true Riches. And so it is *Health and Soundness* too, *Prov. 3. 8. It shall be health to thy Navel, and marrow to thy bones.*

Secondly, *From a state of darkness, to a Land of Light.* You know the grave is a place of darkness; and death, a state of darkness. Thus is it in the Spiritual death. Dead souls are all in darkness, under the power of darkness, *Act. 26. 18.* The grave for our dead bodies is a place of darkness: but the grave for dead souls, is a place of utter darkness, of everlasting darkness. The grave is Formidable, and deep. You know when a body is dead, it must be buried, that it may not annoy us. God hath provided a grave to bury dead souls in out of his sight; and where do you think that this grave is? Why Hell is the grave for dead souls. The rich man was dead, and was buried, but where was he buried? His soul was in Hell, so some translate this place, *And being buried, in Hell he lift up his eyes, Luke, 16. 22, 23.* Hell is a place of darkness, and thick darkness. O that is horrible indeed, that is reserved for poor impenitent sinners; *the blackness of darkness for ever, Jude 13.* He doth not onely say *darkness*, but *blackness of darkness for ever.* Ah brethren,
grave

this is that which Christ hath recovered you from, from death to life. If you go down into the grave, and see how the dead do lye in darkness, and silence, how formidable is that! But oh how will it be, to see the grave of hell where dead souls are buried! This was your place before you were sanctified. Ah brethren, what manner of praise, what songs of deliverance should you compass the throne of Gods grace withal, who have such a change wrought upon you?

Thirdly. *From a state of Impotence, to a state of power.* A natural state is an impotent state, *Rom. 5. 6.* *When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ dyed for the ungodly.* As a dead man is not able to move a finger to put off the worms that crawl upon his body and face: So a dead soul cannot get the victory over his flesh, and lusts. He is under an impossibility of doing any thing acceptable before God. But now God hath given you strength, that you should *leap and walk, and praise God.* God did put strength into thy feet when he recovered thee from death to life, that thou shouldest be able to go thorow difficulties for his names sake. Brethren, those that are altogether without strength were certainly never brought to a true and spiritual life. If thou art brought from death to life, thou hast some strength. it may be it is but a little strength; But every Saint hath a little strength, so that he doth not live in the wilful practice of any sin. If thou hast not thus much thou art dead in thy sins.

Fourthly.

Fourthly, *From a state of Insensibleness, to a state of Sense.* A Dead man is without sense; He hath Eyes, but he seeth not; and Ears, but he heareth not: And thus it is with a dead soul. But now you that are believers, you are raised from this miserable state. I may say to you, Blessed are your Eyes, for you see; and your Ears, for you hear. O what a change hath he wrought upon you!

1. *He hath opened your eyes, when others are in blindness.* Brethren! what a change is this? How many do you see that live where the Gospel is Preached, and yet remain ignorant? O! what thankfulness should this provoke you to? You are restor'd to your spiritual sense. Before, you thought it the smallest matter in the world to sin against God: Now, you look upon it after another manner. O how should you bless God in those words of our Saviour, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* O! How many be there of the wise men, & great men of the world that have their eyes closed? God hath hid these things from them that they cannot see them: But your eyes see, give God the glory.

2. *He hath bored your Ears, when others are in deafness.* When others are like the deaf Adder, he hath given you the hearing Ear, the obedient Ear; O! consider this, and be thankful. Thou hast of thy self a heart

as obstinate as any other heart in the world. Now if God hath given thee ears to hear, O bleſs his Name! How often may we call upon a Dead man, and he never hear? so we may call upon dead souls, and they hear not, with their souls at least, though they hear with their ears.

3. *God hath loosed your Tongues, when others are dumb and silent.* O what mercy is this? Beloved, you could not breath before God your Prayers and Requests with life and fervour as you do, unless God did unloose your tongues, and open your mouths. Man's lips are locked up, and his tongue tyed up, that he cannot utter himself before God; or at least, not with that fervency that others can: O bleſs the Lord that he hath loosed your tongues.

4. *He hath given you Appetites, when others relish not the things of God.* Dost thou find any *hungerings* and *thirstings* after Christ, and his Righteousness? Is this that which thou dost pant after, to be made more conformable to the Lord? Dost thou pant after Christ, as others pant after the world? O bleſs God that hath put such a difference between thee and others. When others relish not the things of God, they are sapless things; yea, many times they seem burdensome things to them, God hath given thee such an appetite, that thou findest a relish in them, that nothing goes down so sweetly, as the service of God.

5. *He hath given you your feeling, when some others are past feeling.* We read of some that were *past feeling*, Eph. 4. 19. You know a dead man hath no sense or feeling; if you lay a Mountain upon him, he feels it not: So it is with a dead soul, he feels not the burthen of his sins, he complains not for his sins: Now canst thou say, that thy sins be the greatest trouble to thee in all the world? O bless the Lord for this! It is a great privilege; you that are Believers do groan under this burthen, and 'tis your duty so to do; yet under this there is some life, or else you would not feel your corruptions as you do.

And now to close all, let me renew the Exhortation, *Rejoyce and be Thankful*; that though you were lost, you are found again. O remember what a condition you were in when you were lost! Do you not remember what bitterness did seize upon you? How many times did you give up your souls, and did believe that you should never be found, or restored? And did God find you when you were lost? O consider who it was that found you. Christ came from Heaven to Earth to take thee up, poor lost sheep, upon his shoulders, to carry thee to Heaven; O be not forgetful, but *Rejoyce, and be Thankful*.

*A Letter sent by him to an
Intimate Friend.*

NOW will I make known to my dearest Friend, some of the thoughts of my heart this morning, before I begin to write to thee; There was once a poor soul imprisoned in flesh, and clogged with the Iron fetters of corruption, that retired within it self, and would needs take a view of the best and worst sight imaginable at once. Well, he sets open the Floodgates, and in he dives into the fathomless depths of an evil heart, but there he could find no bottom; Then up he springs, and begins to take the Dimentions, and view the Massie weight of the Crown incorruptible: His heart grew hot within him, and while he was musing, the fire burned, and on a sudden he pathetically smites on his breast, and out he breaks into this Language,

Ah wretch, what a sight is here! methinks my heart is like the Chambers of Imagery, I can turn me no way, but the loathsom sight and filthy stench of my Corruptions comes up into my Eyes and Nostrils, my pollutions are so foul; that I cannot tell how to look upon them, and yet so common, so universal, that I cannot look besides them: which way soever I look into my self, I can cast my eye on nothing but the loathsom sight of
some

some filthy Ulcer, which makes me filthy in my own eyes, and how much more to the pure eyes of my spotless maker; when I turn my eye inward, and go about from Cell to Cell, I pass from one to the other, and am fain to write, *Lord have mercy upon me on every dore*: Every faculty is as a cage of unclean Birds, and O the noysome lusts that lodge and live within them! I look'd into my memory, and O what a Magazine of wickedness was there! weak I find it, and slippery when any good is committed to it: Alas, methinks I am like a narrow mouthed bottle, that takes in but drops when the bounty of Heaven pours down by shows. Though the dew of Heaven distill as the rain, yet how little do I take in? how much is spilt besides? but yet this is not all, there is a leak in my Vessel that lets all that is good run out, only the dregs are left behind. 'Tis little good that I take in amongst a world of evil, and presently my Rudder lets go the good corn, and the chaff is kept behind: Capacious it is to receive, faithful to retain what should be forgotten: well thought I, I will shut up this, but I heard the voice, as to the Prophet of old, speaking to me, *turn thine Eyes, and thou shalt see yet greater Abominations then these*. Look into thine understanding. But good Lord, what a sight have I here! why it is all overspread with *Aegyptian* darkness; yea, much more intolerable, it being not my plague only, but my sin: Alas, how do I grope about in blindness and ignorance,

and wander in the path of error, and though the light shine in darkness; yet the darkness comprehendeth it not : How mean and shallow is my capacity ? so dull that I cannot conceive, nor apprehend the mysteries of Godliness, but am ready to ask with unskilful *Nicodemus*, what do these things mean ? what Riddles are many Gospel truths to my soul ? I am apt rather to dispute them, than to believe them ; as if I had rather judge of things by the light of reasons candle, than God's Sun : O fool that I am, and slow of heart to believe, how is my understanding tyed to my senses, that I am apt to believe little but what I see ? what poor low conceptions have I of God, how little a portion do I know of him ? he goeth by me, and I see him not ; he passeth on, and I perceive him not ; how little is it that my understanding will reach too ? and how grossely do I apprehend and conceive that little ? Although Christ hath anointed my eyes, yet my imperfect sight of the things of the Gospel is like his we read of, who saw men walking as trees. But you, O Blessed Souls who are now in Glory, you see face to face what I see in a glass darkly ; your Sun is risen, you see by the clearest Meridian light, what I am fain to grope for in the dark ; those mists of darkness and ignorance are dispelled from your understandings, and you have the blessedness to see, what I have scarce faith to believe ; Thrice happy Souls, your day ends not, your Sun sets not, you have perfect day, no clouds overcast you ; you have perfect

fect knowledge, no scruples molest you; you are perfect light, and perfect life: The mysteries hid from us, are made known to you; your light is increased, your capacities are enlarged, your vail removed, and *you are filled with all the fulness of God*: mysterious Providences are all unravelled to you, you see the glorious contexture of every piece, and all the art and contrivances of that curious Tapestry, of which I can see but here an arm, and there a leg, and know not how to put passages together, nor what to make of them. O when shall that which is in part be done away? when shall the day dawn, and the day star arise in my heart? my soul waits for the Lord, more than they that wait for the morning, yea, more than they that wait for the morning. Alas, how doth my spirit sink oftentimes, when I consider the imperfections of my understanding? how I am at every turn baffled and posed in my own thoughts, and perplex'd in a labyrinth of difficulties, out of which I cannot extricate my self. Oh when will the time come that I shall see as I am seen; and that I shall have all my objections answered, my doubts resolved, my difficulties removed? Ah this cloud of flesh, what glory dost thou keep from shining upon me? how can I see through all this dirt? well but in thy light Lord I shall see light: In the mean while I should be contented, if I could walk up to that dim light I have; but alas I have so stubborn, so headstrong a will, that it will not use the light I have;

have ; my understanding is backward in assenting to the truths propounded, but how much more backward is my will in consenting and practising ? so that I am even like them in the Prophet, *Brutish in my knowledge*. Who would believe, did they see my coldness, and deadness in Holy Duties, how remiss I am, when begging pardon of sin, for mortifying and quickning grace, that I were begging for my life ? who would think by my negligence in the wayes of God ; and that wretched indifferency that is in my heart, that I did believe the *Kingdom of Heaven was to be taken by violence, and that the gate was so strait, and the way so narrow that leads to life*. Oh Hypocrisie ! I preach up diligence, and I live in sloth ; I preach up humility, and live in pride ; I speak of the vanity of the creature, yet I idolize it ; of the sinfulness of sin, yet I cherish it ; of the life of faith, yet am a stranger to it. I believe that sin is the greatest evil, and that Gods wrath is the greatest Curse ; but alas ! how strangely do I live below these principles ! how am I apt and ready notwithstanding, to choose sin, rather than affliction, and venture the displeasure of the Almighty, to gain credit and applause amongst men ? If it be hard to believe, how much harder is it to practise ? I know but little, and yet how little do I of what I know ? The flesh is still lusting against the spirit, so that I cannot do the things that I would ; yet though my strength be but weak, how short do I come of doing all I can ? and what a secret

secret Antipathy is there in my heart against the truths of God, and the wayes of God? though my understanding be over-powred with the evidence of truth; yet I do not receive it in the love of it. O the deep enmity that there is in my heart against Christ, notwithstanding all the personal excellencies that I know to be in him, and all the benefits I have received from him! he shed his heart-blood for me, and yet I do begrudge any service for him. Oh how willingly did he bear the Cross for me! Yea, was exceedingly straitned till that Baptism was accomplished, *I delight* (saith he) *to do thy will O God*, and yet he tells us this was the will of his Father, that he should lay down his life for his Sheep; yet do I murmur to bear any thing from or for him. Alas, he did far more readily part with his life for me, than I do with a lust for him; Yea, those sins that were my Saviours Murtherers, do I entertain and cherish in my heart, and yet I say I love him; but how can I love two Masters? so much of the love of sin as there is in my heart, so much enmity is there against Christ; and O how much is there then in my heart? to this day I flatter my self that I love him, but alas! where is my tenderness of his honour, my care to please him, my zeal for him, my delight in him, my longing after him: Ah where are these fruits of my love to him? Alas! what a stranger am I to these things! well may he reply upon me, as she upon *Sampson*, *How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thy heart*

is not with me? I can see him pouring out his Soul on the Cross for me, praying, sweating, bleeding for me, combating with the Torments of Hell for me, and wrestling with the wrath of the infinite God for me, that I might be delivered; and yet, O Rock of Adamant that I am, I bleed not, I melt not, I mourn not, I can read the story of his Love-letters to my soul, and view all the passages of his love to me, his compassions towards me, his care of me, his provision for me, upholding, protecting, strengthening, delivering me; yet nothing moves me: Ah how I read the story of his bitter death and passion, with dry eyes, and a hard heart! and all passes away like a Tale that is told; sometimes it may be my heart may be warmed, and my affections will seem to be in a flame, and O then what I will do, how I will live, how zealously I will act, and how chearfully I will suffer for Christ, *I will spend and be spent for him*, not a lust shall be spared, not a duty that shall be baulked; but alas! *my Righteousness is like the morning dew, and like the early cloud that vanisheth away*. 'Tis strange to see how soon my fire is out, and my affections congealed, upon a suddain I am all over ice again, and O what a rubbing and a chafing must I use, to keep alive a little heat, a little warmth! and all is scarce enough neither, when will the blessed time come, when shall I be swallowed up in Love? Oh Blessed are you who are now with Christ, that live continually in the sweet embraces of those
blessed

blessed Arms, you are all the Beloved Disci-
 ples, and have the priviledge to lean on his
 Breast; you are alwayes in the Lap, and
 are warmed continually in his bosom, when
 my affections freeze with cold, you feel the
 beatings of his heart, and see the tender wor-
 kings within, the warm influence whereof
 melts you into the like affection; and thus
 are you for ever Blessed, receiving, and re-
 turning love; when my wretched heart to
 this day retains abundance of enmity against
 him, who loved me, and gave himself for
 me. A great misery it is not to have a return
 of love, but my misery is not to return love
 for love. Ah wretched heart, who can but
 be out of love with such a heart, as will
 not be in love with such a Saviour? Oh it
 troubles me, not so much that I receive no
 more Love Tokens from him, but that I can
 send him no more. I beg not so much to be
 beloved by him, as that I may love him: I
 could be content to have fewer expressions of
 love from him, so I might have more love
 wrought in my heart towards him: well,
 but the time will come when my spark shall
 be all in a flame, and I shall be all love, when
 I shall for ever dwell in God, and dwell in
 Love. I shall shortly be where no nipping
 winter shall cool the heat of my affections,
 where no waters shall be able to quench
 my flame, no, my fire shall never go out
 more; But I shall be continually taken up in
 loving and admiring, and my soul shall be
 for ever possessed with perfect Love: I shall
 then

then need no pains to warm, no Sermons to quicken me, no faith to raise me; but mine eye shall affect my heart, and my soul shall make me as the Chariots of *Aminadab*. I hear of him now by the hearing of the Ear, at a great distance, but then my Eye shall see him; yea, with these eyes shall I see God, with these Arms shall I embrace him; then shall I see the wounds in his side, and in his heart, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and be no more faithless, but believing; O blessed time, when he shall take me by the hand, and own me before Men and Angels, me unworthy wretch, when I shall hear that ravishing Sentence from his blessed mouth, *Come thou blessed of my Father, come inherit the Kingdom that I have prepared for thee, that I have purchased for thee: Surely then I shall not need to be bid to love him, when David had made an end of speaking, it is said, The heart of Jonathan was knit with the heart of David, and he loved him as his own Soul; So surely will it be with me, when I have heard that blessed sentence; no jarring then between my understanding and my will; between my will and my affections; between my self and my brethren, but a sweet and perfect Harmony. Star-light shall then become perfect day, and my affections and life perfectly consonant, and I shall for ever joyn with that blessed Quire praising, and admiring that love, that now I have so much adoe to believe, sing out the high praises of our God, and of the Lamb, who hath*
loved.

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. O will it not be a welcome time? I know you begin to cry out, *how long Lord, how long*; why this is thy portion, embrace it, count upon it; let us lift up our heads, the day of our redemption draws nigh; *yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

I would have my Friend inflamed by this, though all this while I have scarce gotten my self into any heat. Well, I conclude with the Martyr, pray, pray, pray; I know you do, but be importunate; I know you are, but continue to be, and the Lord fill you with himself, and cherish you in the secrets of his presence; Farewel,

Christ's and Yours

Joseph Alleine.

FINIS.